FIRST THINGS

POPE BENEDICT ON LOVE AND JUSTICE Richard John Neuhaus

THEOLOGY AS KNOWLEDGE Stanley Hauerwas, Paul Griffiths, David Hart, and James Stoner

SACRED SPACES & OTHER PLACES Catesby Leigh

SUING THE CHURCH Charles Chaput

RELIGION IN U.S. DIPLOMACY Thomas Farr

ALSO: Gilbert Meilaender looks at the Crunchy Cons
Thomas Hibbs reads Alasdair MacIntyre on Edith Stein
Daniel Mahoney reviews Richard Pipes on Russian Conservatism

The Public Square

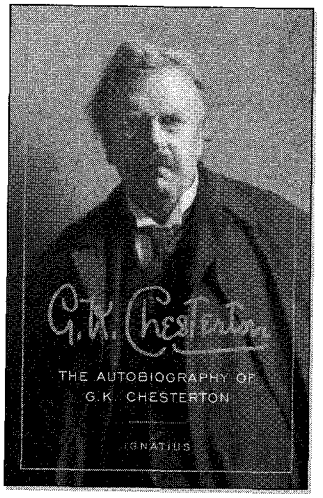
A Survey of Religion, Culture, and Public Life

May 2006 • Number 163 • $4.95/$5.95 Canada

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Autobiography of G. K. Chesterton

G.K. Chesterton

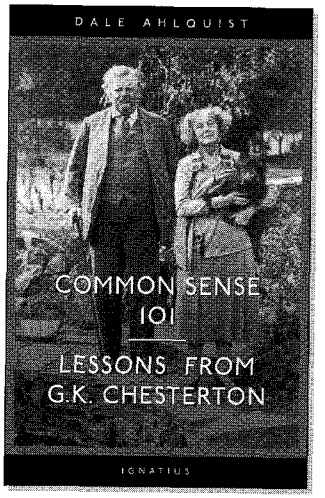


Here is a special two-in-one book that is both by and about G. K. Chesterton. This volume offers an irresistible opportunity to see who this remarkable man really was. Chesterton was one of the most stimulating and well-loved writers of the 20th century.

Here is Chesterton in his own words, in a book he preferred not to write, but did so near the end of his life after much insistence by friends and admirers.

Full of Chesterton's wonderful and unique writing, humor, inspiration and humility, with **40 rare photos**, this book will be greatly desired by Chesterton fans.

GKCA-P . . . 344 pp, Sewn Softcover, $16.95



Common Sense 101 Lessons from G. K. Chesterton

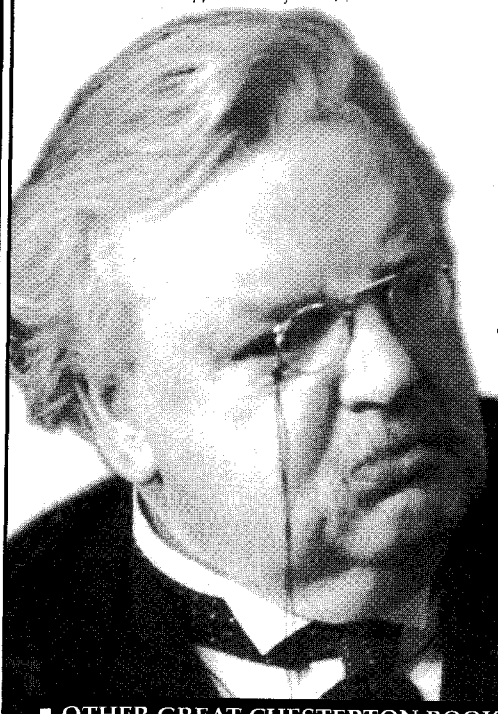
Dale Ahlquist

Ahlquist, the President of the American Chesterton Society, and author of *G. K. Chesterton – The Apostle of Common Sense*, presents a book of wonderful insights on how to "look at the whole world through the eyes of Chesterton".

Chesterton wrote a hundred books on a variety of themes, thousands of essays for London newspapers, penned epic poetry, delighted in detective fiction, drew illustrations, and made everyone laugh by his keen humor. Everyone who knew Chesterton loved him.

As Ahlquist shows in his engaging volume, this most quoted writer of the 20th century has much to share with us on topics covering politics, art, education, wonder, marriage, fads, poetry, faith, charity and much more.

CSEN-P . . . 300 pp, Sewn Softcover, $16.95



THE G.K. Chesterton APOSTLE of COMMON SENSE

■ OTHER GREAT CHESTERTON BOOKS ■

G. K. Chesterton The Apostle of Common Sense
Dale Ahlquist
ACS-P . . . 188 pp, Sewn Softcover, $13.95

St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Francis of Assisi
G.K. Chesterton
TAFA-P . . . 320 pp, Sewn Softcover, $16.95

The Man Who Was Thursday
Annotations by Martin Gardner
MWWT-P . . . 290 pp, Sewn Soft, $16.95

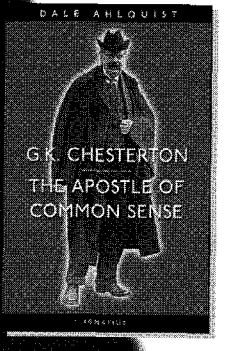
The Everlasting Man
ELM-P . . . 270 pp, Sewn Softcover, $14.95

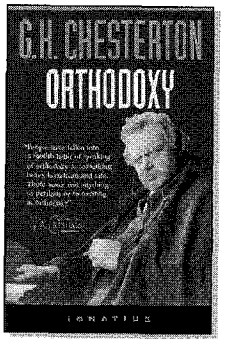
Lepanto
Edited by Dale Ahlquist
LEP-P . . . 130 pages, Sewn Soft, $11.95

The Ballad of the White Horse
BWH-H . . . 280 pp, Sewn Hardcover, $21.95

Orthodoxy
O-P. . .170 pp, Sewn Softcover, $11.95

What's Wrong With the World
WWW-P . . . 205 pp, Softcover, $14.95





■ WWW.IGNATIUS.COM ■

ignatius press P.O. Box 1339, Ft. Collins, CO 80522 1 (800) 651-1531

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FIRST THINGS

May 2006 • Number 163

Correspondence

2 Evolving Darwinism; The Church Body; The Evangelical Spirit; Garbering Shakespeare; Breaking the Truce; *etc.*

Opinion

Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. 13 Suing the Church

E. Christian Brugger 14 Moral Stem Cells

Thomas F. Farr 17 The Diplomacy of Religious Freedom

RECEIVED
APR 21 2006
BALDWIN-WALLACE
RITTER LIBRARY

Articles

21 Theology as Knowledge: A Symposium
James R. Stoner, Jr., Stanley Hauerwas, Paul J. Griffiths, and David B. Hart

Gilbert Meilaender 28 Hold the Granola

Catesby Leigh 33 Sacred Spaces & Other Places

Books

Daniel J. Mahoney 38 Russian Conservatism and Its Critics by Richard Pipes

John Wilson 44 Life in the Undergrowth by David Attenborough

Thomas S. Hibbs 48 Edith Stein by Alasdair MacIntyre

Edward T. Oakes, S.J. 51 Paul of Tarsus by Edward Stourton

55 Briefly Noted

The Public Square

Richard John Neuhaus 63 Pope Benedict on Love and Justice, *etc.*

Poetry

Julie Stoner (11), Oliver Murray (20), *Belle Randall* (32), *Michael Juster* (37)

First Things (ISSN #1047-5141) is published monthly (except for combined issues June/July and August/September) for $39 per year ($14.97 for students) by the Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: send address changes to First Things, P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Editorial Offices:** The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. **Editorial Phone:** (212) 627-1985. **Email:** ft@firstthings.com. **Website:** http://www.firstthings.com. **Advertising Offices:** 129 Phelps Avenue, Suite 312, Rockford, IL 61108. **Advertising Phone:** (815) 398-8569. **Email:** firstthingsadsales@pma-inc.net. **Subscription Department:** P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Subscription Phone:** (877) 905-9920. **Email:** frth@kable.com. Unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage. Newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., One Media Way, 12406 Rt. 250, Milan, OH 44846.

Copyright © 2006 by the Institute on Religion and Public Life. All rights reserved. Produced in the USA.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FIRST THINGS

FIRST THINGS is published by Religion and Public Life, an interreligious, nonpartisan research and education institute whose purpose is to advance a religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society.

Editor-in-Chief: *Richard John Neuhaus*
Editor: *Joseph Bottum*
Managing Editor: *Erik Ross*
Junior Fellows: *John Rose, Mary Angelita Ruiz*
Poetry Editors: *Paul Lake, Anthony Lombardy*
Publisher: *Institute on Religion and Public Life*
Publishing Service: *Publishing Management Associates*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Midge Decter
Timothy George
Mary Ann Glendon
Wilfred M. McClay
David Novak
Michael Novak
George Weigel

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Hadley Arkes
Stephen M. Barr
James Burtchaell
David Dalin
Thomas Derr
Jean Bethke Elshtain
Elizabeth Fox-Genovese
Suzanne Garment
Robert George
Russell Hittinger
Leonid Kishkovsky
Glenn Loury
George Marsden
Robert Louis Wilken

CORRESPONDENCE

Evolving Darwin?

I have over the years followed the writings of Stephen M. Barr on evolution and intelligent design. I do not have the scientific training that Barr has, but I'm usually able to follow his arguments, even when I disagree with them. But in his most recent article ("The Miracle of Evolution," February), he lost me. Barr goes beyond science to ask, dismissively, "What baleful philosophical implications would this [the scientific claims of neo-Darwinism] have?" He then answers his own question, "Absolutely none." Anticipating my reaction, he adds, "Some people are concerned about naturalism," but attempts to explain away that concern by saying, "If one is happy with natural explanations of the formation of stars and planetary systems, why not of plants and animals?" This kind of thing could give sophistry a bad name.

Is it possible that a man of Barr's education really wonders *why* some of us would not accept a natural explanation for the formation of stars and planets in light of discoveries made possible by the Hubble telescope? A Big Bang presupposes a force that brought all this into being (that is, God).

People who believe there is a natural explanation for the formation of stars, the planetary system, plants, and animals are, by any definition, naturalists. Neo-Darwinists have made it clear that they presuppose a natural beginning of the universe (that is, no God). Does Barr really want to know why I don't agree with that?

Barr goes on to argue that "all natural explanations obviously presuppose a natural order that is lawful." The neo-Darwinists I have listened to do not presuppose any such thing. Even if they did, I'd be less than satisfied: If there is a totally natural explanation for the formation of stars and planets, where does the evidence of design come from? And as for humans, how do they end up with an *imago Dei* planted in them?

This convoluted argument, an attempt I suppose to appease the neo-Darwinists, falls short. There are indeed "baleful philosophical implications." Naturalism by any other name is still naturalism.

Charles W. Colson
Prison Fellowship
Washington, D.C.

Stephen M. Barr's article makes some good points, but in the end it is unsatisfactory because it ducks the main issue. For me, the trouble started with this sentence: "In the case of neo-Darwinism, we must start with what it really asserts *as science*." Is neo-Darwinism a science at all? Almost all Darwinists hold that biology is a material science, like physics. But the main feature that makes physics a science is verification by controlled experiment. That is impossible in biology; we cannot isolate instances of "evolution" in the laboratory and test them. Darwinists claim that every species derives directly from an earlier species. Yet Darwinists cannot demonstrate, as opposed to assuming, a single example. That seems to be a considerable liability. As science, neo-Darwinism has no standing, or at least no standing greater than that of Intelligent Design.

Robert Ghelardi
Joliet, Illinois

I read with great interest, and largely agreed with, Stephen M. Barr's article. In particular, I agree

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the need to "draw as clear a line as possible between science and philosophy." I am concerned, however, that the article leaves the impression that the proper place to draw the line puts neo-Darwinism on the scientific side of the line and the statement "Man is reducible to matter" on the other side. The motivation to draw the line there seems to be a religious one. Design-debunkers such as Dawkins will point out that religious people draw the line there for reasons of "irrational" faith rather than science. After all, if we "swallow the camel" by not challenging the notion that unplanned natural forces gave rise to all living things, starting from nothing but nonliving chemicals, and "strain out the gnat" of man's consciousness as the sole exception to an otherwise completely natural explanation, are we not allowing religious beliefs to interfere with scientific explanation?

Theories that attempt to explain how human consciousness can be rooted in material causation alone are indeed highly speculative—but so are theories for the origin of life. Why draw a line between these? It seems to me that the line must be drawn where science itself tells us to draw the line: at the edge of what science, without the prop of naturalistic philosophy or the influence of religious belief, can tell us at present. This line is likely to shift with time. Agnostics or atheists are free to express their confidence that the line will eventually shift to encompass within science all phenomena, including the origin of life, consciousness, and the universe and the physical laws governing it. Christians will differ in how far they think the line will eventually move. The debate will involve detailed discussions of scientific evidence and not religious issues or metaphysical naturalism. We should likewise insist, however, that science draw the line based on evidence currently in hand, not on naturalism or evidence that could theoretically be acquired in the future.

Ron Larson
Ann Arbor, Michigan

In "The Miracle of Evolution," Stephen Barr concludes by saying, "We need not pit evolution against design, if we recognize that evolution is part of God's design." While I believe that evolution in the neo-Darwinian account proposed by Dawkins and others *could* be part of God's design, the scientific evidence shows that it is not. In *Evolution Under the Microscope* (2002), David Swift argues for intelligent design. He seems to have been ignored by the scientific establishment. Swift maintains that evolution occurs, but is limited; that many cases of evolution of species have been observed, but these can be explained by gene segregation guided by natural selection. The process is analogous to the way in which one can artificially "evolve" a species by selective breeding. In both cases, one is not creating new genetic material but selecting from genetic material that already exists.

How does one create new genetic material, which would be required for the evolution of more complex organisms from simpler ones? Swift shows that this cannot be done by random mutations: Biological processes require enzymes that are composed mainly of polypeptides, which in turn are composed of amino acids. Each amino acid is coded by a sequence of three DNA nucleotides. A mutation in DNA could cause a change in the amino acid sequence in a polypeptide. However, a polypeptide needs to have at least seventy amino acids in order to fold, and only then can it function as an enzyme. Since a short polypeptide cannot function at all as an enzyme, you cannot "evolve" an enzyme from it by natural selection.

This is just one example of the many problems that must be overcome in order to find a "natural" explanation for the evolution of complex organisms from simpler ones. Concerning the evolutionary explanations put forth by Dawkins, Dennett, and others, I would have to call myself an agnostic.

James F. Nugent
Salve Regina University
Newport, Rhode Island

Congratulations to Stephen Barr for drawing a distinction between science and philosophy in "The Miracle of Evolution." Rarely has this subject been addressed so clearly. I take issue with Barr, however, when he makes the transition from self-organizing properties of nature (crystals and planetary orbits) to the ability of randomness to bring about plants, animals, and biological evolution.

The clearest boundary between nondesigned and designed things is the presence of *code*—abstract symbols that represent real objects. Neither I nor any naturalist I've ever talked to has been able to identify a single instance of a naturally occurring process that matches Claude Shannon's model of encoding and decoding in *The Mathematical Theory of Communication* (1948). Whether the code in question is computer code or the genetic code, all codes we know are designed.

Design by definition means that an idea precedes its embodiment; I know of no simpler or more rigorous argument for intelligent design than the very existence of codes and language. Norbert Weiner, father of cybernetics, said almost fifty years ago that "Information is information, neither matter nor energy. Any materialism that fails to recognize this will not survive the present day." Information itself is an entity on par with matter and energy.

So if the information in DNA defies naturalistic explanation, then what about the evolution of that information? I'm personally open to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the possibility of common descent, and, like Barr, I'm quite certain that if life evolved, the mechanisms that caused it to do so are miraculously elegant. But randomness itself offers no answers—natural laws cannot produce symbolic language.

Microbiologist James Shapiro of the University of Chicago has done fascinating research into what he terms "a twenty-first-century view of evolution." He has documented the ability of protozoa to segregate their own DNA into over 100,000 pieces and rearrange them to produce more-fit progeny. Our immune system adapts to a variety of threats through this same process.

If this is how evolution happens, then it is nothing like the "random variation" that Darwin, Dawkins, and Dennett have described: It's an intelligent process. As Barr eloquently said, "It is incomparably greater to design a watchmaker than a watch." Equally impressive is a watch that gives birth to watches more fit than itself.

Perry Marshall
Berwyn, Illinois

Stephen Barr fails to understand how the word *random* is really used by neo-Darwinists. Their trick is to place the engine of evolution into events (mutations) that are unpredictable, which allows their imaginations to spin tales of ever-more-advanced mutants. Barr points out that randomness can exhibit higher-level order, but neo-Darwinians are not asserting the existence of a stochastic (random) mutational process. But if the laws of mutation were found, their creative engine would run into combinatorial limits and neo-Darwinism would collapse.

Barr errs again when he applies a double standard to inferences of a designer in science. He acknowledges that, by finding order in nature, science has strengthened the design argument without threatening the distinction between theology and science. But then he insists that the Intelligent Design movement is inserting a supernatural designer into science when it explicitly acknowledges design. It should be perfectly acceptable and even advisable in both cases to be "metaphysically modest" about who or what the designer might be. No one denies that some evolution happens; the question is the type and extent. There is nothing unscientific about affirming limits to evolution.

Furthermore, Barr fails to see the exclusion of formal and final causes as a defect that undermines the ability of science to properly characterize the natural world. If science were merely an academic exercise, there would be no concern. But in our time, as Phillip E. Johnson points out, the authority to describe "the way things really are" belongs to natural science. If science allows no purpose in the natural world, which contradicts reason, its influence becomes harmful.

Ralph Gillmann
Burke, Virginia

Despite its scholarly and objective tone, Stephen Barr's defense of neo-Darwinism relies on a series of invalid arguments. Barr tells us that "the neo-Darwinian mechanism is one of trial and error, and we know that trial and error can achieve impressive results if enough trials are allowed." But embedded in those two dozen words are several flawed concepts: A dictionary definition describes "trial and error" as "finding the best way to reach a desired result by trying out one or more ways and eliminating the causes of failure." But evolution as presented in neo-Darwinism lacks a desired result and an intelligence to judge which trials are successful. Barr's statement is a form of anthropomorphism, attributing human characteristics to the blind forces of nature with no logical justification.

Barr continues, "The question of the adequacy of neo-Darwinism, then, is ultimately one of numbers." But one can never determine whether a past event did occur solely on the basis of probabilities. Many things that are possible, or even probable, do not happen.

On a metaphysical level, Barr fails to recognize the essential difference between animate and inanimate objects. Cardinal Schönborn was explicit in discussing *biology*; Barr countered with an analogy about the formation of crystals—an unrelated phenomenon. Crystals form naturally all the time, but no one has observed the formation of a new eye, a new wing, or any other organ.

Science tells us that each living cell contains as much information as one hundred volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Information theory tells us that information content cannot increase through random changes. Does Barr really believe that the DNA code resulted from "random mistakes," as neo-Darwinism requires?

Joseph H. Gehringer
Manahawkin, New Jersey

Steven M. Barr replies:

Charles Colson asks whether I "really wonder why" and "really want to know why" he thinks certain things. I certainly do, and perhaps the readers of First Things do; and so it is a shame that he did not spell out his reasons more clearly. It falls to me, therefore, to reconstruct Colson's line of argument as best I can from the sketchy indications he has given.

Some people see in the word *natural* simply an antonym of *supernatural* or *divine*, and so they see "natural explanations" of phenomena as excluding the divine.

Consequently, they imagine that proofs of God's existence or activity must be based on events that either defy natural explanation or are naturally impossible. I think this explains Colson's rather vehement negative reaction to the idea that modern astrophysics provides "natural ex-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

planations" of anything and his appeal to the Big Bang, in which he apparently finds the all-important naturally impossible or naturally inexplicable event.

To be sure, one can make arguments for the existence of God based on naturally inexplicable events, such as miracles or fulfillments of prophecies. Such arguments have a long and distinguished pedigree, and they certainly strengthen my own faith. There is also a certain kind of "design argument" that is based on phenomena that are purported to be naturally inexplicable. For example, Newton pointed to the stability of the solar system, and the Intelligent Design movement points to the origin of life and to irreducibly complex structures in biology. Such arguments also have their place, though they can backfire badly, since they are vulnerable to refutation by later scientific developments, as Newton's argument was notoriously refuted by Laplace.

The older, more traditional, and more robust kind of design argument, however, does not look to things that contravene the order of nature but to the order of nature itself. The classic design argument points to the beautiful, providential, and harmonious structure of the world, its orderliness, and its lawfulness. Whereas natural explanations can undermine arguments based on miracles or design arguments of the kind used by the Intelligent Design movement, they have actually strengthened the more traditional design argument by showing that the order of the universe is more profound and subtle than had previously been thought. It is precisely the intelligible structure of the world, which natural science has elucidated with such spectacular success, that points to its being the product of intelligence.

I don't know what neo-Darwinists Colson has listened to, but I have never come across any scientist who doubts that there is a lawful natural order. Why then do so many of them not recognize design? Probably spiritual blindness, as suggested in Wisdom 13:1-9 and Romans 1:19-22.

Since the Big Bang as a naturally inexplicable or naturally impossible event seems to play a crucial part in Colson's thinking, some cautions about it are in order. First, while the Big Bang undoubtedly occurred, it cannot yet be said with any certainty that it was the beginning of the universe. There are reasonable and well-motivated scientific hypotheses in which it is not. Second, we are not even sure yet (from a strictly scientific standpoint) that the universe had a beginning in time. Third, the beginning of the universe (whether it happened at the Big Bang or earlier) may very well have been perfectly "natural" in the sense that the processes involved were in accordance with, and perhaps necessarily entailed by, the fundamental laws of physics. There is no scientific reason to suppose otherwise.

Some might think that such a "natural beginning" contradicts the Christian and Jewish teaching on creation. But as St. Thomas Aquinas well understood, the metaphysical argument for creation *ex nihilo* does not depend on there being a beginning in time at all, let alone one that violates the order of nature. As the well-known quantum cosmologist Don Page (a devout evangelical) has said, "God creates and sustains the entire universe rather than just the beginning. Whether or not the universe has a beginning has no relevance to the question of its creation, just as whether an artist's line has a beginning and an end, or instead forms a circle with no end, has no relevance to the question of its being drawn." Finally, whether the universe had a beginning in time, whether the Big Bang was that beginning, and whether that beginning was "natural" are questions that have nothing directly to do with the theories of how stars and planets formed. From all this, one can see that Colson's appeal to the Big Bang to show that astrophysics cannot yield "natural explanations" of star and planet formation is utterly unfounded in science, philosophy, or theology.

Let us accept, however, Colson's view that the accounts of planetary and stellar formation provided by modern astrophysics do not qualify as "natural explanations." How would that affect the point that I made in the passage he quotes from my article?

Not at all, as can be seen by replacing the words "natural explanations" with the words "scientific accounts": "If one is happy with scientific accounts of the formation of stars and planetary systems, why not of plants and animals?" I have never heard any anti-Darwinist give a coherent answer to this question.

Colson says that "naturalism by any other name is still naturalism." And yet, what we have here is not one idea going by different names, but one name being used for different ideas. What "naturalism" means to philosophers is the acceptance of *only* natural explanations. Colson uses it to mean the acceptance of *any* natural explanations. Thus he says, "People who believe there is a natural explanation for the formation of stars, the planetary system, plants, and animals are, by any definition, naturalists." Wrong. Not by *any* definition, not by the standard definition, only by *his* definition. Since the whole business of natural science is to study natural phenomena and discover the natural explanations of them, Colson's rejection of naturalism as he defines it is tantamount to a rejection of all natural science.

It baffles me that Colson asks where I think the *imago Dei* comes from. In my writing, which Colson professes to have followed "over the years," I affirm in many places that man has a spiritual soul not reducible to matter, one that is conferred on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him directly by God and is responsible for his spiritual powers of intellect and will. I have quoted Calvin's *Institutes*: "God [exalted] man above all the other animals to separate him from the common number, because he has attained to no vulgar life, but a life connected with the light of intelligence and reason—[this] at the same time shows how he was made in the image of God." Calvin was referring to the same "ontological discontinuity" between man and other living things that Pope John Paul II spoke of and that I affirmed clearly in my article.

Finally, the fact that I treat with respect an idea that has much in its favor, that is believed by the great majority of scientists, that has no decisive arguments against it, and that may well turn out to be true—I am speaking here of the scientific theory called neo-Darwinism—is not "appeasement" but intellectual humility and honesty.

I thank Robert Ghelardi for his letter, but I must disagree with him that what makes something a science is verification by controlled experiment. There are areas of scientific study where one cannot perform controlled experiments but rather must infer things about the unrepeatable and uncontrollable past from the traces it has left in the present. This is true in much of astronomy and geology, for example, as well as in evolutionary biology.

Ron Larson makes some interesting points, with which I am largely in agreement.

James F. Nugent seeks to show by scientific argument that neo-Darwinism is inadequate. I am quite open to being persuaded of that. I have not been claiming that neo-Darwinism is necessarily true, merely that it is compatible with traditional Christian faith.

Perry Marshall is correct that "randomness itself offers no answers." It is the combination of randomness and the winnowing process called natural selection that is offered as an answer by neo-Darwinists.

Ralph Gillmann is mistaken about my double standard. I see nothing wrong with basing design arguments on scientific facts and theories. As he says, I have done it myself, and have no objection to "Intelligent Design theorists" doing it. But a philosophical argument that is based upon science is one thing, and a scientific hypothesis is something else, as Robert T. Miller explained so lucidly in these pages in his article "Darwin in Dover, PA" (FIRST THINGS, April).

Joseph H. Gehringer is right that natural selection differs from ordinary examples of trial and error. As far as using probabilities to determine whether past events did occur, I think that can sometimes be done with a great deal of confidence. One might decide in that way, for instance, whether someone has been cheating at cards. In any case, I would point out that it is the Intelligent Design theorists who are using probabilities to say that things must have happened in a certain way. Gehringer is right that we do not see the evolution of new organs take place before our eyes. It takes too long. That is also why we don't see stars form or mountain ranges rise before our eyes. As for his final question, I don't pretend to know how the DNA code developed. I am not an advocate for any biological theory.

The Church Body

In his article "From Ratzinger to Benedict" (February), Avery Cardinal Dulles writes, "in [Joseph Ratzinger's] earliest observations he contends that [the dogmatic constitution on the Church] did well to subordinate the image of the Mystical Body to that of People of God. The Mystical Body paradigm, much in favor under Pius XII, makes it all but impossible to give any ecclesial status to non-Catholics and leads to a false identification of the Church with Christ her Lord." I find this a puzzling assertion on its own terms, and also as a view attributed to Joseph Ratzinger.

In *Dominus Iesus*, Ratzinger uses the image of the Church as the Body of Christ several times, and he asserts, "Just as the head and members of a living body, though not identical, are inseparable, so too Christ and the Church can neither be confused nor separated, and constitute a single 'whole Christ.'" On this point Ratzinger cites Thomas Aquinas, and throughout *Dominus Iesus* he seems entirely in accord with Thomas' affirmation that Christ is the head of all men and therefore the Mystical Body is coextensive with humanity. As Thomas puts it, all people "can be classed as members of the mystical body because of their potentiality, and not merely when they are actually in it. Some members have a potentiality that will never be actuated. Others are eventually actuated, and this in three degrees: The first is by faith, the second by charity on earth, the third by the enjoyment of heaven."

I would certainly agree, as Eric Voegelin put it in his lectures on Hitler and the Germans, that Aquinas' understanding of the *corpus mysticum* was subsequently, tragically, overshadowed by a "ghettoizing" conception of the Church among both Catholics and Protestants and that Pius XII's *Mystici Corporis Christi* represents "the most severe contraction of the membership of the Church that it had ever received." Recognizing this, however, does not, as Dulles claims, implicate the Mystical Body image itself as the cause of the subsequent contractions.

Dan Knauss
The New Pantagruel
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., replies:

In a booklet published during Vatican II, Joseph Ratzinger wrote that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the notion of the Mystical Body, as expounded in Pius XII's encyclical of 1943, "made it all but impossible to give any status to Christians separated from Rome" and that it "easily led to a false identification of the Church with Christ." At the time Ratzinger rejoiced that the Council was complementing the image of the "Body of Christ" with that of the "People of God." He later found it necessary to correct abuses of the concept of "People of God." All images, including the great biblical images, have their limitations.

Dan Knauss is correct in what he says about Thomas Aquinas. Pius XII in his encyclical combined the patristic theology of the "whole Christ" with Bellarmine's societal concept of membership. Thomistic commentators on the encyclical, drawing on the Angelic Doctor, proposed to modify the pope's conclusions by introducing subtle distinctions among different kinds of membership: potential, virtual, and actual. Instead of following this route, Vatican II chose to speak of different ways of being ordered to, joined to, and incorporated in the People of God. Ratzinger supported the Council's approach rather than that of Pope Pius or his commentators.

Vatican II by no means rejected the image of Body of Christ, or Mystical Body, but it subordinated all the images, including "People of God," to the theological concept of the Church as sacrament, which Karl Rahner called the *Grundidee* of Vatican II's ecclesiology. The notion of sacrament allows for partial realizations of the Church.

The declaration *Dominus Iesus* was not written until 2000. An official document of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it is not a personal statement of Cardinal Ratzinger. But it seems more Thomistic in its ecclesiology, as Knauss suggests. In its fourth chapter it speaks of the Church as Body of Christ, citing both Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. One might perhaps be justified in inferring that Ratzinger *senior* has become more favorable than Ratzinger *junior* to the Body of Christ as an image of the Church.

The Evangelical Spirit

Timothy George, in his article "Evangelicals and Others" (February), offers the insight that "ecumenism is a central portion—a core concern—of the evangelical faith and the evangelical church." I was left wondering, however, about the corporeality of ecumenism in evangelicalism today. Clearly there is an ecumenical spirit, but are the hard materials present that can allow evangelical churches to progress toward Christian unity?

The reports about evangelical churches are not so encouraging. Use of the ancient ecumenical creeds is lacking. Current evangelical trends are moving further away from historic Christian patterns of worship: a service of the preaching of the word and administration of communion. In this way, evangelical churches have grown far from their Reformation roots. The magisterial churches of the Reformation, while protesting the Roman church, continued to recite the ancient creeds. Calvin, Luther, Bullinger, Cranmer, *et al.* contested the worship of Rome, but they reworked and did not discard this form of worship. Hugh Oliphant Olds, in *The Patristic Roots of Reformed Worship*, has shown the diligent attention given to the early Church Fathers by Reformed leaders as they sought to reconsider Christian worship. Such determination is not apparent in evangelicalism.

The conversation among churches today already has a starting point—the Spirit of God has been at work in the Body of Christ, as fractured as it may be. Evangelicalism does not have to retain an incorporeal spirit fluctuating between personalities who are prominent for the moment. It has recourse to the great resources of the historic Christian church, which can mark evangelical worship every week.

Rev. Jeffrey B. Wilson
Providence Orthodox
Presbyterian Church
Royal Oak, Michigan

Timothy George replies:

I acknowledge the need for evangelicals to recover more fully the riches of the wider Christian tradition, including the Reformation heritage. But the situation is not as dire as Jeffrey B. Wilson allows. There is a growing appreciation, especially among younger evangelicals, for a more muscular Christianity—one that is grounded in the trinitarian and christological consensus of the early church, the historic creeds, and God-centered worship. This evangelical movement *ad fontes* is not a tidal wave yet, but it is more than a trickle. I take it as a sign of hope.

Further, it is well to remember that forms and structures alone do not produce visible unity among Christians. Roman Catholic and Orthodox believers have shared similar liturgical traditions for more than a millennium but this has not prevented division. Just so, the spiritual descendants of John Knox claim a noble heritage of Reformed confessions and catechisms, and beautiful psalmody, but whoever can sort out the many schisms and sects of Scottish Presbyterianism deserves an honorary doctorate in church history!

When I say that ecumenism is a central evangelical concern, I refer to the fact of evangelicalism as a global missionary movement intent on preaching the Gospel to every person in the world. This was evident at Amsterdam 2000, a conference convened by Billy Graham that brought together some twelve thousand evangelists from 210 countries, more than

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

belonged to the United Nations at the time. The only other Christian community of comparable international reach is the Catholic Church. The Great Commission and Christian unity belong inseparably together, for Jesus himself linked the two indissolubly: "that all of them may be one . . . so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). However far the modern ecumenical movement may have strayed from its founding purpose, it was born on the mission field, and evangelicalism was its midwife. Perhaps evangelicals today, with their zeal to know Christ and to make him known, can play a part in the birth of a new ecumenism for the twenty-first century.

Garbering Shakespeare

In the Public Square (February), Richard John Neuhaus takes a moment to thank Marjorie Garber for her new book, *Shakespeare After All*. It is, we read, a "marvelous book," not least because it avoids the pitfalls of "postmodernist deflations" and "feminist revisionisms" and "Marxist deployments" that have so damaged the humanities in recent times.

But there is something flatly wrong with giving Garber credit for bypassing the sins of the past—since she has been one of the worst sinners. Here are a few of her books: *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, *Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life*, *Dog Love* (on how humans interact with their pets, including sexually), *Sex and Real Estate* (on how buying a home is like seduction).

These are trite overinterpretations that trade in transgressive phenomena and ridicule the narrow-minded bigotry of middle-class folk who just can't handle the cutting edge. That Garber has written a competent and straightforward study of Shakespeare is a good thing, but her participation in the vulgarities of cultural studies and queer theory is not thereby cancelled.

Mark Bauerlein
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia

RJN replies:

I was not aware of Professor Garber's checkered past. All the more reason to be grateful for *Shakespeare After All*.

The Times They Aren't A-Changin'

Oh, dear. I think my friend Richard John Neuhaus does not realize how deeply he wounds me. In his defense of Peggy Noonan's book on John Paul II, Father Neuhaus asserts that I came "of Catholic age in the debased excitement of the 1960s." Neuhaus knows full well that no one, Catholic or otherwise, ever came of age in the 1960s (witness our only Boomer presidents, numbers 42 and 43, and their long if different migrations toward maturity).

As it happens, I was married and the father of two, with more on the way, before Vatican Council II opened and before the Beatles first landed on Ed Sullivan's show. I am, therefore, a proud 1950s Catholic, who mastered the Latin responses to the Mass in the fourth grade, imbibed Ignatian spirituality in high school, and was mentored in the Catholic Imagination by the famous Frank O'Malley at Notre Dame. I'm still inclined to believe "Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries" and steadfastly sing the classic Latin hymns I learned in choir—albeit alone in the shower, because our crazed liturgists have decreed "Amazing Grace" fit for corporate worship.

If Noonan was moved in middle age to discover her faith through John Paul II, and tingled when this most mobile of popes appeared on our shores, so did I admire Pius XII, who modeled perfectly the "Spiritual Father" as Unmoved Mover by staying put. Because I reached maturity before the wretched Age of Rock, I was never impressed, as was Noonan, a recovered 1960s Catholic, by John Paul's rock-star status.

As for *Humanae Vitae*, it was not we 1950s Catholics who refused to let that sleeping dog lie, but John Paul II, who sought to prop it up with the hopelessly strained "theology of the body" that Noonan finds so revelatory. No other papal document more succinctly belies Neuhaus' contention that "the pope believes what the Catholic Church believes and the Catholic Church believes what the pope believes," and he cannot evade responsibility for dropping this glib nugget of erroneous ecclesiology on the impressionable Noonan.

Knowing the canonization process as I do, I can assure you that Noonan's testimonial will be included as evidence of the pope's reputation for holiness. Postulators collect published encomiums from figures like her, even when they are downright mushy. Alas! Where is the Index of Forbidden Books, now that we need it?

Kenneth L. Woodward
Briarcliff Manor, New York

RJN replies:

Who would have known that one so young in spirit has been around so long? My apologies.

Marriage and Homosexuality

In "The Truce of 2005?" (February), Richard John Neuhaus expressed his disappointment and concern over my appointment by Pope Benedict XVI as archbishop of San Francisco. Conscious of my own unworthiness I will not dispute his evaluation. I should, however, correct some misinterpretations of what I have done and said.

Neuhaus says that I "broke with other religious leaders in opposing a state constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage." I strongly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

support and consistently teach the Church's opposition to same-sex marriage.

Here are some details about that November 2004 ballot proposal: 1) there was already in place a Utah law strictly banning same-sex marriage, which I fully supported; 2) all three candidates for the office of attorney general of Utah (the chief law-enforcement officer in the state) opposed the amendment, including the LDS (Mormon) Republican incumbent, Mark Shurtleff, mostly because they considered it a poorly drafted amendment; 3) I refused to endorse the amendment, but I did not urge people to vote "no"; 4) the leadership of the LDS Church, which has a record for being as strongly opposed to same-sex marriage as the Catholic Church, did not issue a statement urging its members to vote one way or the other; 5) inasmuch as two thirds of Utahans belong to the LDS Church, this means that the leadership of at least 80 percent of Utah churchgoers did not urge a "yes" vote on the amendment. It is not clear to me which "other religious leaders" I "broke with."

In the face of my admonition that priests should follow the moral teachings of the Church, Neuhaus worries about what I did not say. Using that approach, one could express disappointment with Christ's teaching of the two great commandments because of what was left unmentioned.

Neuhaus is astonished by my contention that homosexual orientation was not the cause of the sexual abuse crisis. He goes on to say, "One can agree that it was not *the* cause, meaning the only cause." That is exactly what I was saying. Each year, most of the crimes of sexual abuse of minors are committed by married men or men who have been married. Many of those crimes are referred to as incest. Few people would contend that the cause of these criminal and sinful acts is heterosexual orientation. Is sexual orientation a factor in those heinous actions? That's very likely. Is it *the* cause? No.

In the charter adopted in Dallas in 2002, the Catholic bishops of this country promised to sponsor two extensive studies of the recent crisis, one to consider its nature and scope, the other to consider its causes and context. The former study has been completed, while the latter is underway. It seems prudent to me to wait until this study is complete before we make up our minds about the matter.

Most Rev. George Niederauer
Archbishop-Designate
San Francisco, California

RJN replies:

I thank Archbishop Niederauer for his letter. According to multiple news reports, many religious leaders supported the constitutional amendment. I should have written that then Bishop Niederauer declined to join religious leaders who supported the amendment. He writes that he meant to say that homosexual orientation was not *the* cause of the sex-abuse scandal. Of course, the italicized emphasis did not appear in his printed text. Neither was it in any way suggested in his published interview on these questions. Yes, most sex abuse is committed by heterosexuals. It would be very strange if that were not the case. Homosexuals are a small part of the population, and homosexual priests a much smaller part still. The subject of the commentary to which the archbishop objects was not sex abuse in general but sex abuse by priests. The first study commissioned by the bishops found that more than 80 percent of that abuse was with teenage boys and young men. Whatever the second study turns up, it is unlikely to claim that such abuse was not related to homosexuality. Again, we are agreed that homosexuality was not *the* cause. As I wrote, the scandal would not have happened without negligence, complicity, and, I would add, evasiveness on the part of bishops. True, one should not be criticized for not saying everything that might be said on a topic. In the earlier interview and in his letter, the archbishop does not state the Church's teaching on homosexuality or offer his view of the recent instruction from Rome on homosexuality and the priesthood. It is important to keep in mind that silence, however puzzling, does not imply dissent.

Breaking the Truce

In his thoughtful essay on homosexuality and the priesthood ("The Truce of 2005?" February), Richard John Neuhaus presents the chilling possibility of a "truce" in which the magisterium would fail to enforce the directive against gays entering the seminary. The truce would be an attempt to avert schism. Father Neuhaus suggests, but does not quite say, that the problem with this sort of tiptoeing is that it's already too late. The schism already exists, just beneath a not-so-smooth veneer of cooperation and bonhomie, in the Church community and even in diocesan curiae. There exists a sharp split between those who receive the Catholic faith as it is and those who "receive" their own revisions of the faith. One might crudely say that the division is between those who were cheered by Cardinal Ratzinger's election as Pope Benedict XVI and those who were in mourning. At ground level, the two sides know who they are and are not in doubt as to the split between them.

As most parents and teachers would attest, teaching consists in more than offering written or spoken words: Words must be reinforced with example and action. Children are always watching to see if parents "really mean it." The children of *Mater et Magistra* are watching as well. Documents, sermons, and speeches are certainly not enough.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our magisterium may finally have to realize that risking open schism may be necessary to retain even minimal credibility as teachers. If the split were in the open, at least some clouds of confusion would disperse and the splendor of truth could shine more brightly.

Joe DeVet
Houston, Texas

Richard John Neuhaus reports that the Church wants to ordain manly men.

I hope that is not a call to give favored spots in the assembly to those "beautiful people" who are already rich in the world's esteem. I did not read Bishop D'Arcy's comments as calling for more sermon references to golf and the Super Bowl. Holiness is needed, not some artificial manliness quotient or requirement of normalcy.

Charles Roth
Chicago, Illinois

Richard John Neuhaus' essay points out the difficulties that the pope will encounter in implementing the instruction on homosexuality. I would suggest the onus of putting the directive into effect rests on the shoulders of the American bishops. Whereas the bishop in Rome has the task of clarifying doctrine, the good shepherd for each diocese is its own bishop.

When Athanasius was fighting Arianism in fourth-century Egypt, he did not expect Pope Sylvester to bring down that heresy: He suffered much persecution for resisting compromise on the essentials of the faith. That was his job as bishop.

In *Rise, Let Us Be on Our Way*, which he wrote on the fiftieth anniversary of being ordained a bishop, John Paul II said that courage is the most important quality expected of a bishop. He quoted these strong words of Cardinal Wyszynski: "Lack of courage in a bishop is the beginning of disaster. Can he still be an apostle? Witnessing to the Truth is essential for an apostle. And this always demands courage."

Peter Dowbor
Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

In his essay on homosexuality and the priesthood, Richard John Neuhaus expresses astonishment at Bishop Niederauer's remark that it is a mistake to regard sexual orientation as the cause of the sexual abuse scandal. Father Neuhaus supposes that because 80 percent of the cases of abuse were with teenage boys and young men that sexual orientation is a cause of the abuse.

It is the duty of all Catholics—laypeople, religious, and clergy—to control their sexual behavior and resist impulses to engage in immoral sexual behavior. There have been scandals involving sexual relationships between priests and women. In those cases, is it worthwhile to speak of the cause, or *a* cause, of that sort of problem as the priest's heterosexual orientation?

I believe that when Bishop Niederauer and many others caution against thinking of homosexual orientation as the cause of sexual abuse, they are asserting that we, and the Vatican, would do better to focus less on the content of a person's sexual fantasies and more on his or her ability to control his or her sexual desires.

Dale Wisely
Birmingham, Alabama

Traduttore, Traditore

I agree with Richard John Neuhaus that the New American Bible and its variants leave a lot to be desired ("More on Bible Babel," January). But even if we could switch to the Revised Standard Version or the English Standard Version for our lectionary, with whom would we share these translations? Catholics in Canada *were* using the RSV but are now using, as long as they can, the New Revised Standard Version. Catholics in the rest of the English-speaking world use the Jerusalem Bible.

Mainline Protestants use the NRSV, while most evangelicals use the New International Version. Then there are those Protestants who still hold to the King James Version.

It seems that there will never be one common Bible shared by all Christians. Even when the King James Bible was dominant, it was never accepted by English-speaking Catholics, who stuck with the old Douay-Rheims and its later revision by Challoner.

Perhaps it's time for all of us to come together and make a new translation of the Bible from the original languages. Until then, it's every man for himself.

Michael Demers
Phoenix, Arizona

As a contributor to the revised New American Bible, I must respond to Richard John Neuhaus' unfair attack. Slamming NAB for rendering Psalm 23:6, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord *for years to come,*" rather than "forever" with RSV or "for length of days" with Douay-Rheims, Neuhaus makes the extraordinary claim "that there is nothing in the Hebrew that requires or even suggests a change" of the traditional translation "forever."

That claim is baseless: Israel at that stage had no belief in life after death in a modern sense. Even if some Christians later understood "eternal life" in a "fuller sense," one cannot push later interpretations on early texts. And does the Hebraism "for length of days" convey *anything* in English, let alone long life?

Neuhaus criticizes the NAB for rendering Genesis 1:1-3, "In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth," rather than "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," on the grounds that much Christian inter-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pretation presupposes the latter translation. But tradition should not determine biblical translation. In any case, NRSV and NJPS (the Jewish Publication Society version) translate similarly, persuaded by the related Hebrew syntax of Genesis 2:5-7, the phraseology of comparable Near Eastern cosmogonies, and the Masoretic vocalization of verse 1 that seems to allow for either translation.

Neuhaus' annoyance spills over into what most people would consider minor matters. In Luke 15, the prodigal son should have gone to "a far country" rather than "a distant country" and have "come to himself" rather than "come to his senses." Such egregious mistranslations, Neuhaus grandly concludes, demonstrate that the translators are "indifferent" to the great traditions of the Bible in English, the history of scriptural interpretation in the Church, and to good English usage. I doubt it.

Any scholar who works every day with original texts sees that even the best translations can falter. They do not on that account deserve to be called "mangled" or "banalized." Translators, it should be remembered, attempt to put an imperfectly known ancient language into an ever-changing modern one.

Two of Neuhaus' criticisms of NAB are flat-out wrong: Nowhere does NAB say, "The fear of the Lord is *the first stage* of wisdom." Also, the revised NAB's Luke 18:9 contains the word "righteousness," not "self-righteousness."

Neuhaus yearns for a simpler time when there were only two major English translations, both sharing a similar style: For Protestants it was the King James Version or an American version (the ASV and then, after World War II, the RSV), and for Catholics it was the Douay-Rheims (from the Vulgate). But that style of translation had already begun to erode by the 1920s with the appearance of the Moffatt and Goodspeed translations. Since then, translations—literal and free—have multiplied. The American Catholic bishops showed excellent pastoral judgment in commissioning the New American Bible. First published in 1970, then updated (New Testament in 1986 and Psalms in 1991), it will be published in a full revised version within the next two or three years. Multiple translations of the Bible are here to stay, and no amount of peevish complaints and indiscriminate personal attacks will make it otherwise.

Richard J. Clifford, S.J.
Weston Jesuit School of Theology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

RJN replies:

I am pleased that Father Clifford and I are agreed on the need to eschew peevish complaints and indiscriminate personal attacks. His statement regarding Israel's belief in eternal life is, to say the least, disputed among scholars. Although I admit that I'm not sure what he means by "life after death in a modern sense." As I wrote, Christian interpretation does have a legitimate bearing on translation. It is the Church's Bible, not the Bible of the academic guild. The two examples that Fr. Clifford says do not appear in the NAB were cited from a Mass guide that employs the NAB. Perhaps this reflects one of the problems with having revisions of revisions knocking about.

Terra Firma

Yes, you're right. I'm sure Armageddon's coming:
wars, tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, locusts,
killer flus, et cetera. Yes, I'm awed by
all the destruction.

I concede your point that the world might end, and
all your puny labors will be as nothing.
Still, you can't go out with your friends until you've
folded the laundry.

Julie Stoner

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dear Patron of the Arts,

Without faith, many artists today produce art that is seriously flawed. They can't reflect human society because they don't know the truth about our society. They are unable to express true joy, true hope, true love, because their experience is limited to conditional joy, hope and love, and they gravitate to despair. Their impact in forming or inspiring culture is limited to the finite and ultimately fails to elevate man.

Though unique in modern times, Living Water College of the Arts is being developed to provide the training that formed great artists of the past. Because Faith and Reason were integral to the refinement of artistic skill, Michelangelo was prompted to declare: "a man does not paint with his hands, but with his mind."

Living Water College will enable excellent art by balancing Fine Art training, Academic study and personal Spirituality. The most effective way to begin educating artists in truth is by giving them a hunger for truth.

With the express encouragement of Archbishop Thomas Collins of Edmonton and Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak, the unique program in film, drama, writing and visual art is being refined by an international committee of Catholic artists and academics, including: Frank C. Turner, actor and iconographer; Thomas Howard, author and international lecturer; Eric Spoeth, film maker; Sean Collins, tutor, Thomas Aquinas College; Shawn Dougherty, Faculty of Drama, Franciscan University of Steubenville; Jerome Spoeth, classical educator; Joseph Woodard, journalist; Patrick Stewart, visual artist; and Michael O'Brien, author and iconographer.

In order to open this college we need your prayers and your financial support. Please pray now and donate what you are able.

In Christ,
Kenneth Noster
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Living Water Arts Foundation

Living Water College needs
benefactors, advocates, mentors… prayers and financial support

Contact:

Living Water College of the Arts Box 100, Derwent, Alberta, Canada T0B 1C0
Phone 780-741-2488 Email admin@livingwatercollege.com www.livingwatercollege.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Opinion

Suing the Church

Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

Last summer, attorneys in Colorado filed the first sex-abuse lawsuits against the archdiocese of Denver since the national clergy abuse scandal began four years ago. All of the suits involved two men: one, a laicized former priest who left active ministry more than a decade ago, and the other, a priest dead for more than a decade. Several of the suits have since named individual parishes as targets along with the diocese. Every claimed incident of abuse occurred more than twenty-five years ago. Nearly all occurred in the 1960s and 1970s.

Under Colorado law, plaintiffs' attorneys have a problem. So many years have passed since the incidents claimed by their clients that their suits may be barred by the statute of limitations. This frustrates victims who seek what they perceive as justice and closure. It also stymies attorneys who know that suing the Catholic Church can be extremely lucrative. Since the early 1990s, the flow of current abuse cases has steadily declined. Breaking open the past could provide a new and profitable frontier for continued sex-abuse litigation. But that requires changing the rules—and applying them retroactively.

And so in Colorado, and a dozen other states, a new and unsettling legal struggle has opened to eliminate or sharply revise the current statutes of limitations that govern lawsuits concerning the sexual abuse of minors. The outcome will have enormous implications for the future of Catholic life in the United States.

Statutes of limitations exist for good reasons: to protect justice, not prevent it. They were created to encourage a timely and fair resolution of claims, which is why law-enforcement officials support them. Over time, memories fade, witnesses die, evidence grows stale, and fraudulent claims increase. But state laws involve two different kinds of statutes of limitations: criminal and civil. Criminal statutes cannot be amended and then applied to past actions, since the United States Constitution expressly forbids retroactive criminal laws, known as *ex post facto* law. But some lower courts have ruled that civil statutes can be extended into the past. Civil lawsuits have a much lower threshold for proof than criminal cases. As a result, retroactive civil liability puts a huge defense burden on any accused individual or institution. In fact, just the possible cost of a legal defense can force a diocese into settlement talks. This serves plaintiffs' attorneys and the persons they represent quite well. Whether it really serves justice is another matter.

Plaintiffs' attorneys and victims' groups often work together in this new strategy of amending the statutes of limitations. Victims' groups may act as stimulants to sympathetic news media and state lawmakers. Plaintiffs' attorneys may then offer help in drafting new legislation from which they themselves hope to benefit. This happened in California with Senate Bill 1779, which became catastrophic state law. The bill opened a one-year window to revive expired California sex-abuse claims, some from seventy years ago, and more than a thousand plaintiffs then filed previously expired claims. The California bill was developed with the direct assistance of attorney Jeffrey Anderson, who has very profitably sued Catholic dioceses and institutions across the country for years. A proposed Colorado version of the legislation is modeled directly on California's.

Once the public is suitably sensitized by news media in a target area, pressure on lawmakers grows to provide "justice" for those victims whose claims have expired due to statutes of limitations. Some victims may say they were too frightened to come forward until now. Others may say they were so traumatized that they couldn't remember their abuse until recently. Typically, attorneys will then argue that the only way their clients will get closure and peace is by litigating their expired cases. It's an effective, appealing argument, and no one can dispute the real suffering that goes with the experience of abuse.

In judging it, however, we need to consider the bill's basic fairness. Any revision to civil statutes of limitations must be comprehensive, fair, and equally applied. This almost never happens. The data clearly show that the sexual abuse of minors is not a disproportionately Catholic problem. In fact, some of the worst adult sexual misconduct with minors occurs in public institutions, particularly public schools. But in most states, those schools enjoy some form of governmental immunity. In other words, it's far easier to sue a private institution, such as a Catholic diocese, than it is to sue a public-school district. It's also a lot more lucrative since, even if governmental immunity were waived, public schools and institutions usually enjoy the added protection of low caps on damages (in Colorado, $150,000). For exactly the same sexual abuse in a public school and a Catholic parish, the difference in financial exposure is millions of dollars.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This has a clearly prejudicial impact on Catholics. But it's also bad law for everybody. Hofstra University's Charol Shakeshaft, the leading expert on public-school sexual misconduct, testified to the Colorado General Assembly earlier this year that nearly 7 percent of students nationally report "being sexually abused in a physical manner by an educator in public schools." That means, according to Shakeshaft, that "of the approximately 45 million students attending public and private K-12 schools, more than 3 million will have been the target of *physical* sexual exploitation by an employee of the school by 11th grade."

If the sexual abuse of minors is so grievous—and it most certainly is—why should its punishment be harsh for Catholic and other private institutions, but soft for public schools where it occurs more frequently? Ironically, most current state laws hold public schools and institutions less accountable—precisely because citizens pay taxes for them. That makes no sense.

Worse, as Shakeshaft points out, "national data indicate that few [public school] administrators report educator sexual misconduct to the police or district attorney. When this abuse is reported to the criminal justice system, it comes from parents or others." And reporting patterns in public schools "show that when students do report [educator sexual misconduct], they are often ignored. Teachers and other staff in public schools are often moved from school to school when allegations emerge, rather than the school attempting to remove the teacher from the district." This is exactly what many Catholic dioceses have been accused of in the past, but with devastating financial consequences for the dioceses.

There is an inequity hardwired into the whole national discussion of sexual abuse. Catholics can live with hard laws if they serve the common good—but the laws need to be equally hard for *all* offending persons and institutions, with the same rules and penalties and no hidden escape clauses.

Revenge, Francis Bacon once warned, is "a kind of wild justice, which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought the law to weed it out." It makes no sense to hold innocent people accountable today for the evil actions of a small number of individuals from decades ago. Diocesan insurance policies, when they apply at all, cover only a modest portion of the crippling sex-abuse settlements that have now become routine. No secret vault of gold exists to bail Catholics out of this attorney-driven legal siege. The people paying for these abuse settlements are innocent Catholic families who had no part in events of the past. Revenge is not justice, no matter how piously one argues it. Punishing the innocent is wrong, yet that's exactly what laws imposing "retroactive liability" are designed to do.

Then, too, settlements should be based on balanced restitution. They should be rooted in the facts of what will help a wounded person heal and find a fresh start—and not on a litigation "market price" based on the last highest settlement paid by another institutional defendant. Justice is a right balance of competing legitimate rights and obligations; it is not a form of auctioneering. Communities of faith have an obligation to generously help the people who have been hurt by their members, past or present. But they also have a right to maintain their mission of serving others and to be protected from predatory judgments designed to gut their resources and identity.

The current effort to amend the civil statutes of limitations governing sexual abuse—which really involves an effort to impose retroactive liability and a new wave of lawsuits on Catholic communities—will continue in more states in the coming months. It could easily decimate the remaining resources of the Catholic faithful in the United States and steal the religious future from a generation of Catholic young people.

In working to protect the future of the Catholic community, we always need to remember that innocent people and innocent families were hurt in the past by some members of the clergy who did terrible things. Some victims have recovered and moved on. For others, the wounds never heal. All of their lives are precious in the eyes of Jesus Christ, and therefore also in the eyes of Christ's followers. Helping them, supporting them, praying for them, and seeking to understand their suffering—while also defending the Church—cannot be mutually exclusive, since all these things serve the truth. Caring for the victims of abuse and assisting them sacrificially is a good and urgent thing. So is fighting bad laws. We need to focus earnestly on both.

Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., is the archbishop of Denver.

Moral Stem Cells

E. Christian Brugger

The desire of the scientific community for embryonic stem cells is not diminishing. Indeed, it is increasing, despite promising research with adult stem cells (scientists have already developed therapies for more than fifty diseases and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disorders using stem cells from bone marrow and umbilical cord blood) and despite the fact that no useful embryonic stem-cell-based therapies currently exist or are even in FDA clinical trials.

Indeed, no amount of success in clinical trials using adult stem cells is likely to lessen the desire of the scientific community for embryonic stem cells—which is what has created the arguments that have dominated the medical news since 2001. For a large swath of the nation, creating human embryos (with the intent to experiment lethally upon them) is morally repugnant, but the scientific community seems unwilling to accept anything else.

But what if we could produce pluripotent stem cells, functionally identical to embryonic stem cells, without ever needing to create, experiment on, and destroy human embryos?

This is what a scientific procedure called "Altered Nuclear Transfer-Oocyte Assisted Reprogramming" (ANT-OAR) proposes to do. The proposal is based upon the premise that the identity and function of each cell in the human body depends, in the first place, on which subset of the approximately thirty thousand genes in the cell's nucleus is switched on or off. In other words, the gene sequence is *not* what is responsible for determining cellular identity, since the DNA is identical in nearly every cell in the human body. Rather it is the *programming* of the gene sequence that distinguishes cell types. This genetic programming is referred to as the cell's "epigenetic state."

We know the key epigenetic markers of pluripotent stem cells, and we know the markers of zygotes, which are one-celled human embryos. The stem cells that scientists seek are "pluripotent" (with the capacity of a cell to develop into most all the tissue types of the human body), while zygotes are "totipotent" (with the capacity to develop *all* the tissues of the human body, and extra-embryonic supporting tissues like the placenta, in an organized and self-directed manner). Using a procedure called "somatic cell nuclear transfer," defenders of ANT-OAR propose extracting the nucleus of a somatic cell (an adult body cell with the highly specified "epigenetic state" of the cell type from which it was extracted, say a skin cell) and then transferring it into an ooplast (an organic sac of cytoplasm left when the nucleus has been removed from an egg cell, or oocyte).

In the ANT-OAR proposal, *before* we transferred the somatic cell nucleus into the ooplast, we would preemptively alter its epigenetic state so that the genes expressed in the nuclear genome are consistent with pluripotent stem cells—but incompatible with totipotency and thus with the existence of a human zygote.

When scientists attempt cloning, they similarly remove the nucleus from an egg cell and insert a new nucleus. And they have discovered that the biochemical constituents in oocyte cytoplasm have the remarkable capacity to reprogram the epigenetic state of a transferred nucleus back to a state of totipotency. When the nucleus is transferred, the cytoplasm goes to work on the genome, and we are back to a totipotent zygote—the one-celled embryo whose moral status has caused so much concern.

For ANT-OAR, the key element in avoiding this is the *altered* nuclear transfer: The genetic material in the nucleus is preemptively altered to prevent its being affected by the reprogramming of the oocyte cytoplasm. The result is that the nuclear genome will never reach a state of totipotency—and thus we would create a pluripotent stem cell (from which, if all goes well, stem-cell lines can be derived) without ever creating a human embryo.

ANT-OAR defenders include such eminent thinkers as Hadley Arkes, Nigel Cameron, Maureen Condic, Kevin Fitzgerald, S.J., Kevin Flannery, S.J., Robert P. George, Alphonso Gómez-Lobo, Germain Grisez, Markus Grompe, John Haas, William Hurlbut, John Kilner, Patrick Lee, William E. May, Gonzalo Miranda, L.C., Archbishop John Myers, Tad Pacholczyk, Peter Ryan, S.J., William Saunders, Monsignor Stuart Swetland, and Thomas Weinandy. Many of them propose initial research using only nonhuman animal cells. If such research establishes that ANT-OAR can reliably be used to create pluripotent stem cells, they would then support research on human cells.

But there remain critics of the proposal. David Schindler, dean of the John Paul II Institute in Washington, D.C., has emerged as the principal Catholic critic of ANT-OAR. In the pages of *Communio*, several essays have appeared over the past year, with defenders of altered nuclear transfer, on one side, and with Schindler and his followers, on the other.

These opponents of ANT-OAR fear the procedure will create, not a pluripotent stem cell, but merely a badly disabled human embryo. Faced with the question of how can it be an embryo when it has the biological characteristics of a pluripotent stem cell, Schindler replies that he does not dispute that the *end result* of the process is a pluripotent stem cell; what he fears is that the entity brought into existence at the *beginning* of the process is a human embryo.

As it happens, the ANT-OAR proposal emerges from the same moral concerns that worry critics such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as Schindler: It cannot be right to create human entities like embryos solely for the purpose of destroying them and extracting their components. So, the defenders hold, the entity brought into existence must look and act like a pluripotent stem cell in every relevant respect in order to be considered morally acceptable; if through animal trials the product exhibits embryonic characteristics, the procedure will be rejected.

The problem, for the critics, is in the way pluripotent stem cells would be created in ANT-OAR. Because the procedure is a form of somatic cell nuclear transfer, its product, Schindler argues, comes into existence in a "species-specific way." The process of ANT-OAR entails the fusing of an ooplast with a diploid somatic cell nucleus. In Schindler's view, this fusion is tantamount, in its effect, to conception.

In fact, he calls it a "mimicked conception." The fertilization of an egg by a sperm brings into existence a single-celled entity whose progenitor cells include an oocyte, and that possesses a complete human genome contained in a diploid nucleus. So, too, somatic cell nuclear transfer used to clone human embryos brings into existence a single-celled entity whose progenitor cells include an oocyte and that possesses a complete human genome contained in a diploid nucleus. And ANT-OAR *also* brings into existence a single-celled entity whose progenitor cells include an oocyte and whose diploid nucleus contains a complete human genome. Whenever we fuse an enucleated oocyte and a diploid nucleus, we "mimic conception"—bringing into existence an entity in a species-specific way and thus creating something that must be a human embryo.

This seems to mean that, for Schindler, the epigenetic state—the programming of the nuclear genome—is irrelevant to the nature of the entity. How this could be so is hard to see. The entity brought into existence through ANT-OAR is *not* totipotent until the specialized epigenetic state of the somatic cell nucleus is reprogrammed through its interaction with the oocyte cytoplasm, and, through preemptive genetic alterations, ANT-OAR sets out to prevent a state of totipotency from ever being realized.

Is it reasonable to hold, as Schindler does, that the entity brought into existence is *in any case* a human embryo? He claims that it is the embryo itself that directs its own epigenetic reprogramming back to a state of totipotency. ANT-OAR, he believes, can modify only the end of the process (to a state of totipotency or pluripotency, etc.), and thus the nature of the entity that originally came into existence in a species-specific way remains a human embryo.

The answer to Schindler's kind of complaint seems obvious. An entity is a human embryo only if the organic material is *able to be human*—if, in the language of Aristotle, it is *apt* to receive a substantial human form. Not every collection of organic material, even material that includes an oocyte and a diploid nucleus, can be a human being. We know this because we know that teratomas (naturally occurring tumors)—together with hydatidiform moles (disorganized entities that occur in humans and other animals as a result of certain types of defects in fertilization) and even oocytes themselves—are not human embryos, yet they all have as their starting material an oocyte and a diploid nucleus.

With respect to the biological conditions for the origins of a human zygote, this means the single-celled entity brought into existence must possess the inherent active biological disposition for self-directed development toward species maturity (including the capacity to develop all tissue types necessary for a differentiated human body and extra-embryonic supporting materials). In other words, the cell must be characterized by an epigenetic state of totipotency.

Biologically speaking, totipotency in a cell is a necessary and sufficient condition for concluding that that cell is a human embryo. It follows that even in human cloning, a human embryo does not come into existence until—among other things—the nuclear genome, through the reprogramming that takes place as a result of its interaction with oocyte cytoplasm, has attained a state of totipotency. The entity *immediately* after nuclear transfer and before nuclear reprogramming is *not* a human embryo that begins to self-direct its own process of reprogramming. Rather, it is akin to a body cell, with the epigenetic makeup of the donor somatic cell.

This suggests that the efficient cause of the reprogramming is *not* an embryo; the efficient cause is the complex of active constituents in the oocyte cytoplasm—the cytoplasm reprograms the nucleus. The product remains a single isolated cell until a state of totipotency is attained, at which point a human organism—a new whole, embryonic human being—comes into existence. In the case of ANT-OAR, the product never is totipotent. It is never apt to receive a substantial human form, and therefore it never becomes a human embryo.

One might still ask: Given the novelty of the procedure, its likeness in certain respects to human cloning, and the complexity and mystery of the progenitor cells used for its starting materials, isn't some doubt about the identity of the product of ANT-OAR justified? And if it is, are we not required to side with caution and refuse to proceed with experimentation that might produce disabled embryos?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If doubt were justified, then such caution would, in fact, be required. But ANT-OAR, as its defenders propose it, warrants no such doubt. It aims to create a cell that, from its first moment, exhibits organic properties biologically *incompatible* with totipotency. Schindler asserts that a single-celled entity can at once be a human embryo and yet manifestly not be (or ever have been) characterized by an epigenetic state of totipotency.

That requires one to believe that a cell's epigenetic identity is not a necessary condition for cellular identity—which, in turn, requires a dualistic anthropology inconsistent with the Christian understanding of humanity. It denies that the biological disposition of the organic material is a necessary condition for determining cellular identity. It implicitly holds that a cell can biologically look and behave in ways biologically indicative of a certain cell type, yet in fact be a wholly different kind of cell.

The property distinguishing a liver cell from a cardiac cell, or a retinal cell from a skin cell, is the programming of the genome. Yet no one would argue that a cardiac cell is a liver cell, or that a retinal cell is a skin cell, or that any of them are human embryos. The assumption that epigenetic identity does not determine cellular identity is clearly false—and moralists concerned about human embryos should welcome and support ANT-OAR as it moves to testing with animal cells.

E. Christian Brugger is assistant professor of theology at the Institute for the Psychological Sciences in Arlington, Virginia.

The Diplomacy of Religious Freedom

Thomas F. Farr

Diplomacy may be the art of letting someone else have your way, but, these days, disagreements over what constitutes the American way in foreign affairs are profound. There are several reasons for our divided house, but a major source is the suspicion that religion is driving the United States' foreign policy. Critics often target President Bush's evangelical worldview, and the putative influence of the Christian right, as behind the war in Iraq and the push for democracy in the Middle East.

While it is true that the president speaks of freedom in religiously informed terms and that religious conservatives tend to support his policy, much of the critique is misinformed or irrational. For one thing, the neoconservative approach to democratization policy (widely acknowledged to have influenced the administration) does not focus on religion. For another, leftist talk about a clash of jihads—Bush's red-state fundamentalism against bin Laden's—is plain fantasy.

In fact, the angst over religion in foreign policy has helped obscure a far more serious problem. America's national security increasingly depends on our ability to understand and address the faith traditions, motivations, and behaviors of *other* societies, especially (but not exclusively) those of the Muslim world. And here the United States is failing miserably, not because of red-state evangelicals but in large part because of garden-variety secularism.

This is not a new problem. As Edward Luttwak noted, in the late 1970s American analysts viewed opposition to Iran's shah in purely secular terms. Religion, if it had a role at all, was seen as marginal. Reports indicated a distinction between "pious" and "modern" Iranians, the former inevitably in decline, the latter moving with the tide of history toward triumph.

History has not been kind to that analysis. But the task is far more than enemy identification. If the United States is to encourage the spread of democracy, it must learn to engage and influence powerful religious communities. Diplomats are too often unprepared when religious groups emerge as power brokers in proto-democratic situations, as they are in Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon, and are likely to be in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In Iran we lack the means to influence religious believers disgusted with Khomeinist theocracy and tempted by democracy.

The political scientist Alfred Stepan has noted that successful transitions to democracy in religious cultures have historically been preceded by an internal debate within the dominant religious community. That debate is typically not about separation from politics, or even secularism, but about the compatibility of religious doctrine with political reform.

In other words, there is evidence that liberal democracy in religious cultures will not emerge without a suitable compact that regulates the overlapping authorities of religion and state, a relationship Stepan dubs the "twin tolerations." This is one way of looking at the task of American diplomacy in Iraq. The democratic experiment there remains in play not only because of the heroic sacrifices of Americans and Iraqis but also because the dominant cultural force—Iraqi Shiism—remains open to liberal democracy and religious freedom as a political arrangement consistent with its teachings. Should sectarian violence reverse that openness, the prospects for success will be dim.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S. diplomacy must help convince all Iraqis, but especially majority Shiites, that a liberal democracy grounded in religious freedom is in their fundamental interests, not simply in economic and political terms, but religiously as well.

This is a critical issue for American national security—but despite its importance, religion remains for the State Department (in Douglas Johnston's phrase) "the missing dimension of statecraft." The permanent foreign-policy bureaucracy still views religion as a private matter, properly beyond the bounds of policy analysis and action. Most senior officers have imbibed the secularization thesis: Spiritual longings are throwbacks to man's infancy and will shrink as modernity replaces superstition with science and reason. Like the scholarly discipline of international relations itself, the schools of diplomacy that dominate at Foggy Bottom—liberal internationalism and classical realism—are securely grounded in secular premises.

Unfortunately, neither the president nor the secretary of state has set out to change the secular myopia that prevails at the State Department. The aversion to religion constitutes a distinctly unrealistic basis on which to engage a world of growing religious fervor—a world in which behavior in nearly every region is influenced by confessional commitments. Todd M. Johnston and David B. Barrett, two experts on religious demography, have recently concluded that "demographic trends coupled with conservative estimates of conversions and defections envision over 80 percent of the world's population will continue to be affiliated to religions two hundred years into the future."

In 1998 a remarkable coalition of faith-based and human-rights groups galvanized Congress to pass the International Religious Freedom Act, which requires American foreign policy to "promote religious freedom" around the world. But the act has not persuaded the State Department to advance religious liberty in any political sense. Instead Foggy Bottom treats religious freedom largely as a sequestered, humanitarian problem. The position of ambassador at large, created by the act as "principal adviser to the president and secretary," is viewed at the State Department as a mere deputy in the human-rights bureau, itself perceived within the building as outside the diplomatic mainstream.

More than seven years into the implementation of the International Religious Freedom Act, the United States' policy has failed to reduce worldwide religious persecution. The State Department persists in "advancing religious freedom" primarily by reacting to the outrages of persecuting governments with bilateral "human-rights dialogues," augmented by occasional private demarches or public denunciations that may threaten, but do not deliver, punitive economic sanctions. Sanctions, of course, can never be the sole basis for policy, but crying wolf is no policy at all.

To be sure, important tracks have been laid. The religious-freedom office, though isolated at the State Department, is growing. It has negotiated one bilateral agreement on religion and is pursuing others. It issues excellent annual reports that identify the symptoms of persecution, country by country. But while its actions sometimes help move an individual or family out of harm's way, the State Department does not attack the structures of persecution—let alone promote religious freedom as a centerpiece of democracy and human flourishing.

Congress has failed to address this situation, in part because of competing views of what religious liberty means, and in part because it invests most of its energy and resources in an independent IRF Commission, also created by the act. The commission often makes good recommendations, most of which are ignored by the State Department. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of some commissioners, that body has failed to focus Congress on the real problem: If America's policy of promoting religious freedom is to be effective, our diplomats must do business in a different way.

The shortcomings of American diplomacy are perhaps best illustrated by our democracy strategy in the greater Middle East. The United States is funding programs on voting, drafting statutes, women's movements, labor organization, journalist training, and the other secular aspects of a democracy, all of which are necessary and good. But, with few exceptions, we are failing to engage directly the religious communities that will help mold civil society and provide the moral underpinning of any democratic state. The religious-freedom office has nearly no input into our broader democracy strategy.

The recent trial of Abdul Rahman for apostasy in Afghanistan drives this point home. Our ongoing programs there pay scant attention to troubling interpretations of *sharia* law until they burst into the news. Our official agencies (and the nongovernmental agencies we fund) are doing little to foster a sustained appreciation for democratic norms among Islamist political parties, to encourage nonextremist madrassas, or to support Muslim scholars and jurists who seek to develop a democratic public theology. Rule-of-law programs, for example, are often run by strict separationists, who have no sympathy for a religion-state covenant.

Without more attention to such issues, Iraq is unlikely to move beyond a balkanized democratic proceduralism, in which citizens and policymakers act

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

along sectarian lines to disadvantage those of differing religious traditions. Even if the insurgency is contained, the result is at constant risk of dissolving into civil war or theocracy. In Egypt, the radical Muslim Brotherhood is rapidly positioning itself as the primary political opposition to the Mubarak regime, but the United States has no direct means of influencing it.

The most immediate threat to United States national security is Islamist extremism, especially of the transnational al-Qaeda variety. Religion-based extremism is likely to continue to prosper in a world in which religious beliefs are deemed by governments unconnected to public life, including the public life of a democracy. Gregory Gause has recently argued in *Foreign Affairs* that the experience of Western Europe suggests that even liberal democracy does not prevent terrorism. Perhaps. But it is equally possible that democracies that accommodate within broad limits the public religious lives of all their citizens can deter religious radicalism. Despite its flaws, the American regime of religious liberty provides evidence for such a hypothesis; the Western European regimes do not. Indeed it is unclear whether Europe has the cultural vigor or confidence to defeat Islamist radicalism.

I recently asked a lawyer at a foreign-affairs agency about the religion deficit in American diplomacy. Why, I asked, do American-funded democracy programs avoid direct engagement with religious communities? His answer might have been taken from Barry Lynn's playbook. The question to be addressed in any such project is "whether there has been a violation of the constitutionally required separation of church and state, whether the funded activity has a secular purpose and, even if it does, whether the funded activity has a primary effect of advancing or inhibiting religion."

In other words, our actions in furthering our interests abroad are subject to the Supreme Court's *Lemon* test for whether a government program is constitutional *within* the United States. This is doubtless why, according to the *New York Times*, the Pentagon recently hired contractors to pay Sunni religious scholars covertly for their advice. At least someone at the Pentagon understands the problem, even if they do not know how to solve it.

Skepticism about official involvement with religion also exists among American conservatives, some of whom believe Islam incapable of democracy, and some of whom think Foggy Bottom incompetent to address the issue at all. Responding to my advocacy for more U.S. engagement with Muslim clerics, a veteran religious-freedom activist told me he had "no faith in the U.S. government's ability to do this sort of thing intelligently: Washington will end up subsidizing the Islamic counterparts of Hans Küng."

But that is where we are already heading. An American diplomat's model of a "moderate Muslim" is likely to resemble a Rawlsian liberal, and the dominant worldview driving American diplomacy on this issue is that of the Left. Some liberals fear Muslim perceptions of unilateralism and cultural imperialism. A more effective policy of engagement with Islam could help allay those perceptions, but many liberals have a pinched understanding of the religious quest itself: It merits some protection in law as a privacy right, but it is no more foundational as a public human good than any other human choice. Indeed, for many liberals, religion constitutes a danger to democracy.

Overcoming such obstacles and broadening America's international religious freedom policy will not be easy. The State Department poses a particularly difficult problem, but thanks to the International Religious Freedom Act a dedicated bureaucracy is already in place. American embassies are increasingly staffed by young officers willing to engage in new strategies and less influenced by secularist orthodoxy than are more senior diplomats. Firm decisions by a president and secretary of state could work wonders—particularly by broadening the authority of the religious-freedom ambassador, giving systematic training to diplomats, and establishing a religion track within the political specialties of the foreign service.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently announced a major repositioning of diplomatic resources to promote democracy in key areas of the world. She has also requested $75 million from Congress to energize democratic forces in Iran. These are important initiatives. The secretary's challenge will be to integrate religious freedom into each—and not simply as a humanitarian issue. She should take steps to ensure that American diplomacy is prepared to address religion in every culture where it affects our interests, from Egypt to China. U.S. diplomats should be able to make the case, in language tailored to the interlocutor, for stable liberal democracy that favors the religious lives of citizens and protects religious freedom for all.

Last spring Congress introduced the Advance Democracy Act, which addressed some of the bureaucratic roadblocks at the State Department but did not tie the United States' religious-freedom policy to promotion of democracy. This shortcoming must be remedied. Some in Congress, it is true, will resist a greater U.S. involvement with religious groups as a "faith-based initiative" in foreign policy, and some doubtless will label it unconstitutional. But the law already requires the United States to advance interna-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional religious freedom. The question is what that means and how it is to be done.

In his second inaugural address, President Bush said that "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one." The depth and quality of our belief in religious liberty are today connected to our national security. For our founding generation religious freedom was not a privacy right but an encouragement to public virtue. In his farewell address, President Washington said that religion yields "dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity."

While that understanding has been under serious challenge in recent decades, its contemporary recovery is vital, not only for America's domestic well-being but also for its engagement in the world. The religious beliefs and actions of others are not the only factor in protecting America's interests abroad and its security at home, but they can no longer be treated as epiphenomenal. It's time for American diplomacy to throw out the secularization thesis and embrace a new religious realism in foreign affairs.

Thomas F. Farr is a former director of the U.S. State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom. His book Word of Faith and Freedom: Why Religious Liberty is Vital to American National Security in the Twenty-First Century *is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.*

Good Friday

The whins measure the wind, the wheel-ruts water
from the unraveling clouds. The topsoil crust
of the garden slowly unrinds itself from frost
in unfreezing air, and the Crown Imperials
by the field's edge give out that pungent smell
we name as fox. These flowers are descended
from *forty fritellarias threepence apeece*
John Tradescant brought here four centuries
ago, and their legend says their haughty heads
have bent in shame with unshed tears since they
refused to bow and weep
as Christ passed by to Calvary.

Though deer may distance warily, the fox,
who quarters all our fields around and has
no names for hedge or fen, catches this scent
but is not much detained. He alerts, then turns
towards lair and vixen in the woods beyond,
away from all this world we make with words,
the unnamed world of those that cannot pray,
promise or betray. These flowers that bow
among the dicebox heads and lazars' bells,
are not just here to flag the Spring, remind
us of their provenance,
or shed our unrepentant tears.

Oliver Murray

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Theology as Knowledge

A Symposium

James R. Stoner, Jr.

Who stripped the public square and left it naked? That puts the matter a bit abruptly, but it is worth asking why religion lost its prominent place in American public discourse during the later decades of the twentieth century—and why the attempt to restore it has triggered a culture war among writers in the republic of letters.

The usual explanations—that secularization of public discourse necessarily results from increased pluralism in American society, or that it was the deliberate product of a determined faction on the Supreme Court—offer clues but remain inadequate. As recently as the 1950s, the pluralism of "Protestant-Catholic-Jew" was apt not to suppress attention to faith but to enhance its public voice. And in other areas of life, such as popular culture and cuisine, pluralism fostered engagement and emulation, not a retreat to the bland.

Meanwhile, blaming judges leaves unanswered the question of why they interpreted the Constitution in so secularist a manner. It underestimates the extent to which the decisions of the Warren Court reflected the common wisdom of their time, and it forces us to ask why those decisions succeeded in binding subsequent judges who are probably more friendly to religion.

In fact, I suggest, the secularization of the public square resulted from the prior secularization of the university. Of course, this itself had a variety of causes, but the academics' decision that theology is not a branch of knowledge, merely an elaboration of belief, helped turn America away from a religiously informed public square.

The issue is as old as Cardinal Newman's day. Several discourses in *The Idea of the University* are devoted to theology as "A Branch of Knowledge," its bearing on other branches, and their bearing on it. In America, it seems to have been around the beginning of the twentieth century when theology was eclipsed in the curriculum of the nation's leading universities, as they transformed themselves from Protestant seminaries into research institutions influenced by the German model. Darwinism in the natural sciences and pragmatism in the others made theology superfluous, the professors thought, and by mid-century the natural sciences were increasingly autonomous, while the humanities and social sciences were enamored of such thoroughly antitheological figures as Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud.

As George Marsden explains in his *Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*, the full meaning of these curricular developments was hidden for a long time—not least from the universities' alumni—by the continued, visible extracurricular religious life of the students: The Yale Christian Association, known as "Dwight Hall," remained a center of student life, and in the 1920s both Harvard and Princeton constructed grand new chapels at the center of their campuses. Religious idealism of a generic sort was a regular object of appeal in addresses by university administrators, even as denominational idiosyncrasies dropped from the curriculum and study of the Bible was marginalized. Though theology was no longer treated as a field of knowledge, the old religious establishments persisted for more than fifty years.

But the shell cannot survive forever without the living organism, and in the 1960s the religious establishments collapsed as clergyman presidents, mandatory chapel, and even formal affiliation with the founding denomination disappeared. The crisis in the universities in those days may or may not have been precipitated by this collapse, but no one can deny the crisis revealed a vacuum of authority. Indeed, American universities today still live with that crisis.

My question, however, is not whether theology ought to be restored as the queen of the sciences, but whether she belongs among them at all. As a political scientist, I am particularly interested in what happens to the national polity when graduates of many universities—especially the oldest, wealthiest, and most prestigious—never saw theology as a serious field of knowledge and thus see religion as, if not an illusion, at most a form of mere belief.

One consequence is obvious: The equation of theology with belief has now been written into the law of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

land. In the 2004 case *Locke v. Davey*, the Supreme Court upheld a state of Washington statute that denied theology students state scholarships that were available for vocational training in every other field. Only Justice Thomas in dissent distinguished "devotional theology" from theology in any other form, and that was to distinguish "the study of theology from a secular perspective." Religion, it seemed to the Court, is all emotion or commitment, not thought, so the state can with reason exclude theological study from its support, even though it was admitted that, since the choice of what to study was made by mature individuals, there was no Establishment Clause objection to including theology if the state had so desired. That the word *vocational* is itself a term of religious origin seems to have occurred to the justices not at all.

Another consequence, as the controversy over intelligent design has revealed, is that society in general (and, here again, the judiciary in particular) seems incapable of imagining that rational doubts can be raised about Darwinism except by those whose reason has been clouded by religious belief. I know good, Christian scientists who are skeptical of the claims made by the proponents of intelligent design, and this journal has certainly been in the forefront of exploring its relation to theology—but these debates take place "off the radar screen" of the general press and apparently in a dimension beyond judicial notice. That science and religion are fundamentally at odds—or, rather, that the one is a matter of the mind and the other of the heart—seems a settled tenet of public debate.

Similarly, because theology is considered tied to emotion rather than to thought, the great moral controversies of our age proceed, not exactly without a theological voice, but with that voice heard only for its conclusions, not the reasoning that attained to them. Indeed, the conclusions are often thought suspect because their origin is presumed to be irrational. On campus, or at least on the faculty, the theological voice is absent or barely audible. One reason for the notorious uniformity of faculty sentiment on issues such as abortion and gay marriage is the banishment of modes of discourse that might produce a contrary conclusion. Students do not believe everything their professors tell them (thank God!), but they do tend to accept that the professors speak for rationality. Some obstinately hold to their faith, but they are made to feel obstinate for doing so.

Indeed, holding theology not to be a form of knowledge creates the entire way religion is approached in our culture. Religion can still make itself heard in the public square—but only by singing or shouting, not as a kind of reasoning. When philosophers, following John Rawls, speak of "public reason" as the test of what arguments and what positions are valid in public, they mean to subject public discourse to the censorship of the secular professoriate. They know, I think, that they will never actually suppress the voice of faith in everyday politics, but they mean to exclude it from the higher reaches of the law, from journalism and the media, from professional and corporate networks, and the like.

Is there a way out of this predicament? Not a political one, or at least not an immediate political one. Anyone who looks at the matter with an open mind will see, I think, that there is at least a kind of knowledge possessed by theologians. Many disciplines have a historical dimension—political theory and constitutional law, for just two examples—and it is becoming increasingly apparent to scholars that simply to understand authors who wrote in the past it is necessary to know something about the theology they took for granted.

From Renaissance art to Enlightenment political theory, every text is opaque to a reader who does not know at least the basics of Christianity. In the study of English literature, no overdose of critical literary theory can compensate for ignorance of the Bible. In the study of history, the age of Western discovery and expansion cannot be grasped apart from the story of its missionaries or the millennial struggle of Christianity with Islam. At the very least, knowledge of religion is needed as ancillary to many fields—and I think scholars appreciate that it is critical in understanding a religion to consider how the religion understands itself. Sociology of religion without theology will not do, as it ends up reiterating the worldview of sociology rather than letting its subject speak for itself.

Still, in my experience, the research program of scholars has not been the only cause of a reawakened interest in theology. Interest in religion is reawakening among students, and, unless they are browbeaten, the students are not satisfied with superficial answers from professors trying to cover their own ignorance of theological concerns. If only to be able to keep up with improved catechesis, professors trained during the apogee of secularism have had to retool to be taken seriously in the classroom.

Nor can they count on scoring easy points by expounding their worldly experience in contrast to their students' narrow upbringing. Few undergraduates have been granted the luxury of an age of innocence; and when not hungry for affirmation of their misbehavior, they are eager to hear a voice of moral authority, and they are astonished when it comes confidently giving reasons, not just making assertions. The questions theology asks—about the nature of God, what can be known in revelation, how to live in the light of these

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

things—are universal. Just to know how to formulate them as questions and where to look to weigh the most plausible answers is a kind of knowledge in itself.

None of this is to say that theology will return to its ancient pride of place. In different kinds of institutions it will have a different function, formative perhaps in resurgent denominational colleges, auxiliary in more-secular universities. Nor is it to say that the current array of religious-studies associations and their journals will satisfy the needs of which I have been speaking. I certainly do not expect anything like the old Protestant establishment to return to authority in the universities, for the current liberal establishment there is in some ways very much like the establishments it replaced.

There will be moments, I trust, for genuine academic leadership, but for now the urgent need is to restore the serious sense of mission among academics who study theology—for, in the long run, even goodwill and an aching desire for a certain kind of learning are no substitute for scholars doing the hard, even sacrificial academic work. Obstacles are already in place: scientists who are not open to understanding the philosophical basis of their own work, counselors and coordinators who disseminate strictly secular doctrines and practices, entrenched scholars whose whole careers have been based on a contrary premise. But a good, clean fight about what is true would itself reform a university culture reveling in cynicism.

James R. Stoner, Jr., is professor of political science at Louisiana State University.

Stanley Hauerwas

James Stoner comes as close to getting it right as anyone I know: Christians have betrayed the university by accepting the rules of engagement by liberal societies, which require that religious convictions, if they are to be recognized in public, be relegated to the realm of "belief." Stoner is quite correct, therefore, to insist that, if the university is to recover its claim to be the site where rationality is achieved through contestation, then theology as knowledge of God should have a crucial role in the university.

The argument here is not simply that you need to know a great deal about the Christian past to understand classical literary works or issues in contemporary political theory. That is true, but Stoner notes that such understandings do not commit the university to acknowledge that theology is a genuine knowledge. The challenge is much more basic: The history of Christianity is not the subject of theology; God is the subject of theology.

Stoner attributes the loss of theology as knowledge to the process of secularization. There is no doubt something to that, but I think we must also recognize that the loss of theology as a knowledge was partly the result of developments in theology begun as early as the division of theological areas in the Middle Ages. More, the modern university emerged in part to legitimate the modern state, and that required the divisions of theology, if the universities were to train ministers as civil servants. In his recent book *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy, and Nation*, Gavin D'Costa draws on the work of Hans Frei to argue that these developments climaxed in the formation of the University of Berlin at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Schleiermacher, the architect of the new university in Berlin, accepted what Frei calls the "great reversal" by which the theologian's task became fitting the biblical story into a world increasingly dominated by disciplines that assume the that the world could be understood whether God exists or not. Following Kant's account of university disciplines in "The Conflict of the Faculties," Schleiermacher argued that theology could, like medicine and law, be included in the university only because such subjects were crucial for training the clerks necessary to sustain the modern state.

Recognizing this history, D'Costa argues that, if theology is to regain its claim to be knowledge crucial for the work of the university, it must be reconnected with the practices that make it intelligible: prayer, the sacraments, and the virtues. In a wonderful chapter entitled "Why Theologians Must Pray for Release from Exile," D'Costa suggests that prayer is the necessary condition to secure the objectivity of theology, because theology cannot be done with intellectual rigor outside the context of a love affair with God and God's community. The formal object of theology is God, and, like other disciplines that require practices and virtues constitutive for knowing the object of their investigation, theology requires prayer.

D'Costa is well aware that such an account of prayer as the necessary condition to recover theology as a mode of knowledge makes it even more unlikely that theology can be acknowledged as a subject in the university. Yet he suggests that theology, if it can reclaim its own best understanding, may find itself the one discipline capable of integrating the otherwise unconnected disciplines that constitute the modern university. "Put bluntly," D'Costa argues, "the purpose of the university is to find love at the heart of all things, for love is the cause of the world. This does not mean that the study of atoms is going to show that love rather than neutrons and protons is to be found. Rather, once the atomic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

structure has been explicated the question of how such ordering analogically facilitates the possibilities of love, harmony, beauty, and truth is vital, and is another way of recognizing the ethical and methodological dimensions of the disciplines."

I do not believe that what D'Costa is proposing is utopian, but it does place the responsibility on those of us who are theologians to do theology as if it mattered. We must bring to an end the disciplinary divisions that invite theologians to say, "I cannot comment on St. Paul's understanding of the gospel because scripture is not my field." Indeed the attempt to make theology "objective" through the transformation of theology into a historical discipline must be seen for what it is: a way to separate theology from its source, which is the praise of God. Of course, none of us are capable of knowing all we need to know to do the work of theology, but we must not forget that we know all we need to know to make the work of theology compelling: God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

Oddly enough, I think D'Costa is right to think universities, even secular universities, are more open today for seriously done theology than many might suspect. The Muslims are leading the way. Read, for example, Saba Mahmood's *The Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*, a book written by an anthropologist who teaches at Berkeley, and then tell me the university is incapable of providing a home for serious theology. Of course it may be that the best theology being done in the university is done in departments not officially identified as theology.

Indeed, I think it may well be the case that secular disciplines and universities are more open to theology being done in an unapologetic mode than are universities still connected with various forms of Christianity. The latter continue to be burdened by the presumption they cannot and should not "impose" Christian convictions on their students. But Christians no longer have the power to impose their convictions on anyone, even their own children—which means theologians are free from the constraining presumption that we "must be careful" because we have the responsibility to maintain the status quo.

In his book *Formations of the Secular*, Talal Asad observes that Islamic preoccupation with state power is not the result of a commitment to nationalist ideas but the result of the confrontation with the claim of modern nation-states to constitute legitimate social identities. He notes, therefore, that "no movement that aspires to more than mere belief or inconsequential talk in public can remain indifferent to state power in the secular world."

That seems to me exactly right, but it also makes clear why the case James Stoner makes for the recovery of theology as a knowledge within the modern university is one that cannot be limited to the university.

Stanley Hauerwas is Gilbert T. Rowe Professor of Theological Ethics at Duke University.

Paul J. Griffiths

James Stoner is eager to remind his academic colleagues that theology takes itself to traffic in truths about God. He thinks this reminder timely and important because secular universities (and they are almost all secular, even those that claim not to be) now largely hold the view that religious preferences and their associated theological claims may have deep personal meaning but can have no cognitive significance and therefore ought not to be treated as if they had. This view, Stoner says, damages universities because it makes it difficult for those who work in them to understand the writings, music, sculpture, and paintings of those who thought that some theological claims were true. He would prefer that universities be places in which people with serious theological commitments might work and flourish as theologians.

Some of this is unexceptionable. Stoner is certainly right that theologians have typically understood themselves to be making claims to truth. And it is also true that contemporary American universities are full of people who would not know how to take a theological claim with cognitive seriousness if their eternal salvation depended on it (which, of course, it may). It is true, too, that they share this incapacity with many in law, politics, medicine, and business, and with a surprising number of people who regularly go to church.

In fact, talking about God as if such talk might be true and of deep importance de-classes you, both socially and intellectually. Those who ride the buses and trains to work in Chicago, where I live, can often be seen reading their daily portion of the Bible in what, so far as I can tell, is a thoroughly cognitivist and nonironic spirit. Those who drive to their tenured positions in universities are instead likely to be listening to National Public Radio, whose writers and commentators seem to find it exotic and worthy of careful condescension that there are Americans who believe they know truths about God and that these truths are important.

The tendency to restrict theological talk to the sphere of personal preference, and thus to insulate it from relevance to discussions of public policy and public mores, now runs deep and broad in our polity. Some peculiarly pure—and peculiarly risible—forms of this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

separation have been recently evident in discussions of intelligent design. I recommend U.S. District Court Judge Jones' December 2005 ruling in the Pennsylvania school district case as an excellently and unusually self-righteously confused example of this restriction of theology to the noncognitive.

But some of Stoner's reasoning is dubious. There is no interesting connection between an inability to take theological claims seriously and an inability to recognize that others do. An erstwhile colleague of mine, Stanley Fish, has done some of the best work of recent decades on John Milton, work that shows abundantly that he understands what it meant for Milton to take theology seriously. But Fish has no tendency himself to hold theological views or to consider seriously the possibility that they might be true.

Our universities are full of people like Fish. There are examples, certainly, of scholars who do not know what they ought to know in order to discourse on theologically freighted artifacts of the past; and there are examples of otherwise intelligent people who are blind to the theological aspects of what they study. But I think they are not numerous. Stoner's example (in *Theology Today*) of the art historian who did not know that the scenes in a picture he was discussing represented the mysteries of the Rosary must be, if not apocryphal, at least rare. You do not need to be a Nazi to understand what it was like to hold Nazi views, and you do not need to hold theological views yourself in order to be able to interpret the work of those who did. Our universities are better than Stoner thinks on this score.

In addition to thinking that our universities would do their historical and interpretive work better if they had more theologians in them, Stoner also thinks that theologians ought to be able to flourish and do theological work in them, just as political scientists like him do: that, we might say, theology ought be regarded as one more academic discipline. But ought it? I suggest, as *advocatus diaboli*, that it ought not, and that there are properly theological reasons for thinking it ought not.

Suppose we consider intellectual disciplines to be individuated by their formal objects. Then political science would be differentiated from ornithology because the one treats the political order and the other has to do with birds. On this reasonable understanding of what marks one discipline off from another, theology would have to be characterized as treating of God.

But God is like neither politics nor birds. God, according to the account of most right-thinking Catholic theologians (and many Protestants and Jews and Muslims as well), is neither an item in nor an aspect of the cosmos. He is the creator of all that is, seen and unseen: He who called the cosmos into being out of nothing, and He whose essence is by definition unknowable to human reason. Anything whose essence could be known to reason would by definition not be God. Reason can establish that God exists, Thomas Aquinas notes (I have some doubts, but let's allow it for the sake of the argument), but in so doing it must confess that it has no idea what it has established the existence of.

Theology does not stop there, of course. But when it says more about its formal object—God—it does so not on the basis of reason but rather on the basis of faith. What this means is a complicated matter, but one thing it means is that theology utters substantive and positive truths about God (that God is prevenient and inexhaustible love, that He was incarnate, and so forth) principally in response to God's self-revelation, God's gift of Himself. Without that gift, constructive systematic theology—the real thing, that is—cannot be done.

But this means that theology is not for everyone. It is not a public discipline. It is a work of the Church, a work of the faithful, an elucidation of what God has revealed and the Church does its best to understand and teach (speaking now of its Catholic variety). The claims it makes and the arguments it offers are premised on truths accepted on authority, which is to say on the credit of their proposer.

As a result, theology's place as a proponent of knowledge in the secular university is uneasy. One important strand in the history of the university's self-understanding, at least since the growth of the research university in Germany in the nineteenth century, is that the knowledge claimed and systematized by the disciplines ought to be public in just the sense that theology is not. (Max Weber's 1916 lecture "Wissenschaft als Beruf" is a classic document in this line.)

If this is right, then it follows rapidly that Stoner needs to think harder about his claim that theology does belong in the secular university, for he is not taking seriously enough what he claims to want to take seriously: theology's self-understanding. He is right that theology claims knowledge, but he does not show any awareness of theology's oddity as knowledge-propounder. He may be thinking of theology as an idolater would: as a form of thought whose object is a being-in-the-world like Zeus or Superman.

Of course, even if what I have written about Stoner's proposal is right, it does not follow that properly theological talk has no place in the university. It follows rather that it should be mentioned rather than used (as with Fish on Milton: Milton uses theology while Fish mentions it).

And there remains, as well, the possibility that the Weberian advocacy of *Wissenschaft* is itself confused. Perhaps all forms of thought, all intellectual disciplines, rest their claims to knowledge on axiomatic truths

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accepted on authority, truths that are therefore not demonstrable by pure or natural reason. If that is right—and there are certainly those in the contemporary secular university who would happily say so—then theology's difference is perhaps not so different.

The paradox here is that orthodox Catholics (at least those of a Thomist bent) are likely to align themselves on this matter with Weberians against poststructuralists and thereby to rule theology, properly construed, out of the secular university. And then, with an elegant irony, only idolaters and poststructuralists will be left to advocate for theology's place in the university.

Paul J. Griffiths is Schmitt Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

David B. Hart

On a great number of points, James Stoner's argument is obviously right. The long, inglorious, forced retreat of religious reasoning from the commanding heights of civic and legal culture has certainly been hastened by the displacement of theology from the center of the modern university's curriculum. Once, in an age now rapidly receding into legend, theology enjoyed the status not merely of a science but of the "queen of the sciences," whose special preoccupation with the highest things—God, the soul, the virtues, the transcendentals, metaphysics—invested her with the privilege of legitimating, inspiring, and unifying all the lesser disciplines. Now, though, her estate is much diminished. In most private institutions of higher learning, she may be tolerated, but she is rarely invited to dine at the high table , and is not encouraged to show herself when company comes to call.

His larger question, however—whether theology might once again be recognized as a genuine kind of knowledge and be readmitted into full society with the humane sciences—is undoubtedly, in some sense, the *correct* question to ask, but it is also a question rather along the same lines as asking whether Arthur might soon return from Avalon to rescue Britain from the European Union. No, the answer seems certain, in all likelihood not. The majority of the faculty of most modern universities would surely regard the claim that theology constitutes some kind of "science" absurd and presumptuous.

Religion, after all (as *everyone* knows), is a realm of purely personal conviction sustained by faith, which is (as everyone also knows) an entirely irrational movement of the will, an indistinct impulse of saccharine sentiment, pathetic longing, childish credulity, and vague intuition. And theology, being the special language of religion, is by definition a collection of vacuous assertions, zealous exhortations, and beguiling fables; it is the peculiar patois of a private fixation or tribal allegiance, of interest perhaps to the psychopathologist or anthropologist, but of no greater scientific value than that; surely it has no proper field of study of its own, no real object to investigate, and whatever rules it obeys must be essentially arbitrary.

Now, as it happens, theology is actually a pitilessly demanding discipline concerning an immense, profoundly sophisticated legacy of hermeneutics, dialectics, and logic; it deals in minute detail with a vast variety of concrete historical data; over the centuries, it has incubated speculative systems of extraordinary rigor and intricacy, many of whose questions and methods continue to inform contemporary philosophy; and it does, when all is said and done, constitute the single intellectual, moral, spiritual, and cultural tradition uniting the classical, medieval, and early modern worlds. Even if one entirely avoids considering what metaphysical content one should attach to the word "God," one can still plausibly argue that theology is no more lacking in a substantial field of inquiry than are history, philosophy, the study of literature, or any of the other genuinely respectable university disciplines.

Moreover, theology requires far greater scholarly range. The properly trained Christian theologian should be a proficient linguist, with a mastery of several ancient and modern tongues, should have formation in the subtleties of the whole Christian dogmatic tradition, should possess a considerable knowledge of the liturgies, texts, and arguments produced in every period of the Church, should be a good historian, should have a thorough philosophical training, should possess considerable knowledge of the fine arts, should have an intelligent interest in such areas as law or economics, and so on. This is not to say that one cannot practice theology without all these attainments, but such an education remains the scholarly ideal of the guild. And, as Stoner rightly notes, the absence or near-absence of theology from the general curriculum has done incalculable harm to students' ability to understand their own fields. This is perhaps especially—or at least most obviously—true in the case of literary studies; but, in fact, it would be hard to name a discipline outside the hard sciences or mathematics that can be mastered adequately without some degree of theological literacy.

And yet, all that said, theology will never be restored in the modern university to anything like the status it once enjoyed, or even to the status of a particularly reputable form of knowledge. Nor is it entirely certain that theologians should wish it to be.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One of Stoner's guiding premises is that the secularization of the public square and the progressive exclusion of religious reasoning from civil law were never historically necessary. At one level, this is true. In purely constitutional terms, the wall of separation between public institutions and faith has no legitimate basis, and the ever more invasive and dictatorial peremptoriness with which generations of jurists have forced an institutional laicism on every stratum of civil society is a betrayal of the federal principle and a violation of republican liberties.

Nevertheless, modernity *is* secularization. It is, in its essence, a project of detaching moral, legal, and governmental reasoning from any authority transcendent of the state or the individual. It is the project of an ethics conformed not to divine justice but to human reason and popular consensus; of a politics authorized not by divine ordinance but by the absolute sovereignty of the nation-state; and of a model of freedom based not on the perfection of human nature but on the unconstrained liberty of individual will.

And America is a *modern* nation—the first, indeed, explicitly to constitute itself without reference to any sacral institution of its authority. In a nation so formed, nothing was more inevitable than a subtle, chronic antagonism between religious and state authority; and, to secure itself against any rival source of moral legitimacy, such a state was forced continuously to drive religious adherence from the public realm into the private realm of "values" (where, of course, it is free to do what it likes). It scarcely constitutes a kind of fatalism to acknowledge that, for all the enormous virtues of its Constitution, and despite the piety of many of its citizens, America enjoys no miraculous immunity from the logic of modernity.

The secular order was born only a few centuries ago, making its first systematic appearance under the guise of a novel doctrine of absolute monarchy and the total sovereignty of the state over its subjects or citizens. And it was an order born in blood: To free themselves from the lingering constraints of an old, moribund, now largely nominal system of political subsidiarity—with its plurality of powers, estates, spheres of competence, and obligations—the modern states of Europe were forced not only to subdue the Church within their territories but to shatter the power of both the Church and the Holy Roman Empire by waging what, to that point, were the most sanguinary wars ever fought on European soil (wars that we are still—as a testament to the power of propaganda—in the habit of remembering simply as "wars of religion").

In the wake of the final triumph of the modern centralized state and of the breaking of the Church, there followed a protracted period of wars, revolutions, tyrannies, and attempted genocides that spilled oceans of blood and that, for rather obscure reasons, we are supposed to think morally superior to the age of "religious intolerance." And so we are all now the beneficiaries of enlightened secular governance and its special achievements: the absolute state and total war (and, of course, a universal right to legal abortion).

So when I say it is not obvious that theologians should desire the restoration of their discipline in the modern university, it is not because I believe in a wall of separation or because I am a Christian separatist who believes the Church should never have allied itself with kings and princes to begin with. It is because I simply find it impossible to grant that the modern secular state is anything other than a frequently wicked perversion of social order.

This is not to say that the time has come for theologians simply to sound their mournful recessional and withdraw from the stage of history. It is to say, though, that it was on terms decided by the secularized university that theology was driven out from the inner chambers of the curriculum, and only on those same terms would theology be admitted back.

This is obvious even from Stoner's conclusion, with its bland recommendation for a theological appreciation of modern academic pluralism. Christians should undoubtedly celebrate truth wherever they find it; but it is not natural to theology that it should function as one discipline among others, attempting to make its contribution to some larger conversation; as soon as it consents to become a perspective among the human sciences, rather than the contemplation of the final cause and consummation of all paths of knowledge, it has ceased to be theology and has become precisely what its detractors have long suspected it of being: willful opinion, emotion, and cant.

I confess I am being intentionally extreme. What I fear, however, is that theology would—as a more generally accepted form of academic knowledge—be required to give its parole and that the price of its recognition by the post-Christian university would be its reciprocal recognition of the secular order. On those terms, exile might be preferable to repatriation on sufferance. The academic margins might be a more hospitable and healthy climate just at the moment. The desert, after all, has often proved the most fertile garden of the spirit, and it may be that a vocation to theology and the ethos of the academy are—for the time being, at least—essentially inimical.

David B. Hart is an Eastern Orthodox theologian and author of The Beauty of the Infinite.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hold the Granola

Gilbert Meilaender

Crunchy Cons
by Rod Dreher
Crown Forum, 272 pages, $24

Making a long drive home from a meeting late last summer, I found myself hungry in the early afternoon. I needed something that would be quick, inexpensive, and good. And there (providentially?) was the sign: a Burger King off the next exit. I felt like a flame-grilled Whopper, and the beauty of it is that you can "have it your way"—which in my case meant hold the tomato and mayo, add mustard. Here is a realm of life where being pro-choice is just the thing for me. I know, of course, that there are some who don't like Whoppers, and that's fine, so long as they do not make the mistake of identifying their likes and dislikes in food with what is right and wrong.

As I began to eat, two young boys (probably about ten and eight years old) sat down with their parents at an adjoining table. Both boys had on Chief Wahoo caps, so I would have known they were Cleveland Indians fans even if they had not been discussing the previous night's game, which they had seen on ESPN. It happened that in my hotel room I had myself spent the last part of the evening watching that same game. I decided therefore to venture a brief conversational gambit. "Go Tribe," I said to the younger of the two boys.

And that set us to talking while we ate—first about the previous night's game, then about the Tribe's chances more generally, and from there we branched off into a wide-ranging discussion that (as I recall) covered everything from baseball cards to steroids. Our ability to watch the Indians on television even though we did not live near Cleveland created a little shared community among us as we sat there eating in Burger King. The experience was so satisfying that I went back up to the counter for a Hershey's Sundae Pie and stayed longer than I'd planned.

Almost everything about that experience would be judged and found wanting by Rod Dreher, author of *Crunchy Cons*, a book that argues for a kind of conservatism that focuses not on the free market or a strong American foreign policy but on eating right, home-schooling children, avoiding living in monochromatic suburbs, being environmentally "green," and being religious in what are thought to be countercultural ways.

I will leave to others the task of sorting out the sense in which Dreher's "manifesto" (as he himself terms it) is or is not a legitimate form of political conservatism in this country. I do have a hunch that five years from now he will be less likely to characterize himself as a conservative, for it is hard to regard as one's comrades so many people for whom one has such evident scorn and disdain. These are "boring" people who are just interested in "things" and are, therefore, caught up in a shallow consumerist mentality. They tend to think that the purpose of life is acquiring more things, living in bigger McMansions, and leading "ordinary" lives. They support the Iraq War "to protect access to cheap oil," which is "what this war is really about"—and without which they cannot drive their gas-guzzling cars the long distances from where they live in their McMansions to where they work. It strikes me as unlikely that Dreher can continue indefinitely to consider such people his allies. But, in any case, since he himself says that "crunchy conservatism is a cultural sensibility, not an ideology," there is justification for considering it in ways that do not focus on politics.

Dreher develops his case primarily through recounting the lives of people who in a variety of ways manifest the crunchy-con sensibility. This makes for a

Gilbert Meilaender *holds the Duesenberg Chair in Christian Ethics at Valparaiso University.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book rather longer than it need be, and I may as well admit here and now that I find these people a little less interesting than Dreher does. (I refrain from characterizing them as "boring," though I have to struggle manfully against temptation in the case of the woman who muses about how fortunate she and her husband feel to have escaped the preoccupation with "things" that characterizes so many smart and good—but boring—people whom she knows.)

Although it is not always easy to say precisely what unites these crunchy-con folk, Dreher characterizes them as committed primarily to faith, family, and community—and it may be useful to take these as rubrics for reflecting on his manifesto. (I will pass by almost entirely one topic—food—that Dreher takes up. If he wants to cut out chips and soda and use that money to buy "ethically and nutritionally superior food," if he wants to spend more of his income to buy meat raised, and produce grown, by those who live near him rather than by agribusiness corporations, I will certainly not tell him to do otherwise—though I feel no strong urge to taste the "creamy sorrel soup" or share the "thin slab of Manchego.")

Different as crunchy cons may be in certain ways, "the thread that ties them all together, that gives them focus, is religion." I would like to believe this, but Dreher's account is so confusing that I often had a hard time knowing what to make of it. He recounts, for example, how, when he lived in Brooklyn, his wife's closest friends were a few other stay-at-home moms who seemed not to be religious but who "were all united in the belief that there was something supremely important about caring for their children." The word "supreme" in such a context ought to be a problem for those who are seriously religious.

Whatever the content of their religious faith, Dreher suggests, crunchy cons are all nonrelativist: All agree that truth really matters. "As such, we are all comrades in the conservative counterculture." Evidently this is crucial, for, at one point in his religious journey toward Catholicism, Dreher concluded that "if there was no God, then there was no right and wrong." But this Dostoevskyan insight remains a bit uncertain, for a few pages later he says "it's certainly not that one has to be religious to be moral."

On the one hand, crunchy cons are looking for a religion that restrains our desires and asks of us a kind of submission. On the other hand, they affirm a "sacramental" vision of the material world, which gives "an essentially religious way of interpreting reality, even if one isn't formally religious." In short, within the confines of his chapter on religion, Dreher manages to blur the important distinction between a view that characterizes all religions as fundamentally alike in that they express the same human experience of sacred power and a view that characterizes religions as ways of life that teach us how to think about the world and that may or may not turn out to be asking the same questions or doing the same things. The conflation is, I suspect, inherently unstable. One of these understandings of religion will provide the sense of submission that Dreher seeks, but it cannot unite the crunchy cons whose religious traditions are different. The other understanding will unite them—and is therefore, in my view, more fundamental to Dreher's vision—but it can invite submission to tradition only by accident, only insofar as that seems fulfilling.

A strong sense of impatience runs through the pages of *Crunchy Cons*. Perhaps it is the impatience of the prophet, and, to the degree that it is, one must attempt to learn from it. Still, over the years I have not found the folks who sit in church with me to be as vapid as Dreher seems to think they are. I admit that, on those occasions when for one reason or another I have been at a Catholic Mass, the liturgy (let us not even mention the hymnody) has largely failed to move me.

Still, even as a Lutheran, I would never say (as Dreher does), that "if the only contact a typical American Catholic has with Catholic teaching and thought is what he hears at Mass, he will remain a self-satisfied ignoramus." I would not say it, in part, because I have watched ordinary bourgeois folk struggle in their different ways to take seriously what happens in the church's worship. And I would not say it, in part, because, evidently unlike Dreher, I do not suppose they were self-satisfied ignoramuses before coming to church. Nor do I think that "traditional Christian values [make] so little apparent difference in the lives many conservative believers lead."

If this is simply an assertion that we all fall short of the beliefs to which we are committed, then it is obvious but not very prophetic. If it is something more, then it fails to do justice to the struggles many believers have thinking about how they ought to live (and it fails, inexplicably, to give us any insight into why they bother to come back week after week when there are so many obviously more interesting ways to spend Sunday morning).

Years ago, as a seminary student, I took a course in pastoral theology taught by a man named George Hoyer. I confess that I remember absolutely nothing from that course—except one thing. Commenting one day on the tendency of pastors to become impatient (and prophetic—this was the late 1960s, after all) with their parishioners, Hoyer said: "Don't forget that these people are coming back week

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

after week to hear you." Then, after a pause, he added: "And you're not always so good." I can find in Dreher's discussion almost no understanding of the struggles of people who are serious believers but who simply decline to spend as much time thinking about their own experience as Dreher does about his.

Although Dreher says explicitly that faith is the thread that ties crunchy cons together, there are many moments in the book when a reader might think that the real key is its emphasis on the family. This comes out even in his discussion of the kind of home one ought to buy. One of the most basic flaws—indeed, one of the vices—of Dreher's book generally is an inability to distinguish between what one dislikes and what is morally wrong.

For example, speaking as one who moved (within the same town) from one house to another a couple of years ago, and who did so motivated in large part by the desire for an attached garage, I perked up when one of the crunchy cons interviewed by Dreher comments about his own "cozy neighborhood": "We're close. The on-street parking. People want to have their garages, but if you have that, you pull in and never have to see your neighbors. That's so isolating. I think the detached garage has led as much to the collapse of civilization as Janet Jackson baring her breast." Well, a little philosophy is a dangerous thing (and there's plenty of evidence for that in the interviews Dreher recounts), but this does not sound to me like the "humility" Dreher claims as a defining mark of crunchy conservatism. It sounds, rather, like someone entirely unable to separate his likes and dislikes about how to live from questions on which, as a matter of morality, we need to agree.

More central to the emphasis on family, however, are Dreher's discussions of mothers who stay home to rear their children, of home-schooling, of being "mission-minded" about rearing one's children. Surely there is much in his account with which to agree. Children need parents who are available for more than short stretches of quality time. A good bit of what happens in school is boring and even oppressive, and what is important could almost surely be accomplished in shorter school days and years. At home some children are simply turned loose with the television, permitted to spend a great deal of time watching programs of questionable worth. And, more generally, children need structure if they are to develop the habits of character that will stand them in good stead as they mature.

Nevertheless, if there is much with which to agree, there is also reason for concern. There must be a way to take seriously the rearing of one's children without focusing with such intensity on "family as mission" (probably the central concept of Dreher's chapter on education). Doing the best we can to rear our children is a task that is both obligatory and (sometimes) satisfying, but to clothe it in the language of "mission" begins to lose something essential to the relation between parents and children: namely, the mystery of it all.

Child-rearing is not pottery or sculpture; the materials in our hands turn out to have ideas of their own. Most of what we know about the task we learn only too late, after our mistakes have been made. Rather than a mission of rearing countercultural children, we have the task of doing the best we can, in love, to set our children on the way in life. We teach them how to behave, we try to set them on the right path and shape their character properly, but we don't own their souls. They must for a time obey us, but they don't have to share all our likes and dislikes.

Dreher is not wrong, of course, to note that some proponents of public schooling in America "explicitly sought to undermine the family" and "separate children from the influence of their families." But, at the same time, genuine nurture recognizes that we must, in various ways, hand our children over to others as well. We do not possess them. Indeed, at moments I found myself wondering whether crunchy cons, in their zeal to turn against an obsession with "things," were not in danger of filling that need for things with children. And I shudder to learn of the children reared by crunchy cons that "these kids are going to be rebels with a cause" when they grow up. We may all hope to bring up children with character sufficient to resist whatever is genuinely evil (and character wise enough not to brand as evil what is simply not to their liking), but to delight in rearing little rebels, who will likely think they know far more than they do, does not strike me as a helpful way to face the future.

This desire to create rebels turns into attitudes such as hostility toward the "media culture" in general and television in particular. "The most important thing we can do is toss out the television or commit ourselves to drastically curtailing its use. Putting ourselves and our families on a strict mass-media diet is vital; how can we ever hope to think on the Permanent Things if we fill our minds with nothing but ephemerality?"

Probably, of course, Dreher does not mean for us to start with the *Dallas Morning News*, for which he works as writer and editor. Here again it is important to distinguish our likes and dislikes from right and wrong. Even as a child, and still as an adult, I have never cared for cartoons or animation, but I can't imagine decree-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing that none of my children should. Moreover, it is far from easy to say what is and is not ephemeral. If my morning sports page reports that in yesterday's game Jim Thome had two hits in four at-bats, that will be true weeks, months, and years from now—when many of the claims made in *Crunchy Cons* have had their day or, even, been demonstrated to be wrong. It may be, moreover, that children who learned from watching *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* day after day will prove to be as imaginative and dependable—even, when necessary, as capable of rebellion—as those who were deprived of that experience. There are a few ways to go wrong in rearing children, but there are many ways in which to go right.

The most important issue, however, lies in the way the book's discussion of the family as mission-minded intersects with religion. I have already recounted how the women with whom Dreher's wife Julie came to be friends in Brooklyn shared a belief "that there was something supremely important about caring for their children." In that context Julie also comments: "All of us wanted more than anything to be a real part of our baby's life. A baby, that's a human being. That's a soul. That's a life. The baby is not an accessory. He's not part of life. He's everything."

But no, as a matter of metaphysical fact, he's not everything. We understand, of course, how a devoted and caring mother might sometimes feel that he is. We understand how he might absorb so much of her time and energy as to seem to be everything. We understand that caring for him is her vocation in life. We understand that the tie between her and her child is so deep and intimate that nothing could entirely efface it. But her child is not everything.

To love that child more than Jesus is, we have it on good authority, to be unworthy of Jesus. To bring that child to baptism is to hand him over to God, who must be the guarantor of his existence, and to the church, which must accept responsibility for him. There is something stiflingly possessive in this account of the parent-child bond. It is, no doubt, understandable—even admirable—in a world where so many children are left simply to fend for themselves, but it sometimes strikes a disturbing note.

It is harder to discuss Dreher's ideal of community, because his depiction of it is less specific than his discussion of faith and family. On the one hand, what he praises in the life of many of the crunchy cons are "the skills of self-sufficiency." Hence, he puts forward as models the people who can raise their own food and the homes where all the essential tasks of life take place, even home churches. On the other hand, however, he is critical of suburban living which, "however comfortable and prosperous," is associated with "alienation and a loss of community." Why exactly self-sufficient independence is more conducive to community than an interdependence that relies on the skill of others to do what we cannot is a mystery to me.

Still, it is probably true that the ideal of community espoused in *Crunchy Cons* is closely related to its attack on a life "too focused on material conditions" or too greedy to have and enjoy material things. Here again, we would be foolish not to grant the truth in Dreher's manifesto: All too often our hearts cling too attentively even to good things (though one might wish that Dreher, for all his rejection of Gnosticism, were clearer about their goodness). The problem, however, is that there are so many different ways that greed may lead us astray.

"I am sitting," Dreher begins a vignette, "in my neighborhood hangout, a wine store and bar next to an Irish pub. It is a warm spring afternoon, and I am relaxing over a book, with an open bottle of tart California white at my elbow. There are worse ways to spend a Saturday afternoon."

Perhaps so, though I can think of few, especially were I to have to wear his Birkenstocks rather than my New Balance sneakers while doing so. We can go wrong by wanting too many things in never-ending supply; we can also go wrong by being too fussy about which things we have. Thus, Aquinas notes that "inordinate concupiscence" in eating may obviously occur by eating too much. But it may also occur, less obviously but just as perniciously, when one seeks food that is "*sumptuous*—i.e., costly food as regards its quality," or "food prepared too nicely—i.e., *daintily*." Aquinas sees how our captivity to things may be more subtle than we realize, so subtle as to enchain us precisely when we think to break free of it.

"Most of us," Dreher writes, "do not believe in restraining our appetites." He is not foolish to worry about our inability to discipline our desire for the good things of life and about our reluctance to make the sacrifices that genuine community requires. Nonetheless, he pays little attention to dimensions of life in which children, for example, may learn just such lessons of discipline and interdependence.

For example, despite all the problems he rightly sees in our schools, children there may play in a band or orchestra—where they will learn to depend on others, learn the meaning of harmony, and need to spend hours in the discipline of individual and corporate practice. Children there may participate in sports, one of the realms of life in which we still are eager for excellence, and in which such excellence demands sacrifice, self-discipline, and subordination of one's own desires

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the shared goal of the team. While reading *Crunchy Cons*, I found myself surprised that its author seemed to know so few people who had profited from such experiences, whereas I know many. I have, I think, as much hope for those boys I met in Burger King as I do for some of the countercultural rebels Dreher wants us to produce.

There is much that strikes me as on-target in *Crunchy Cons*, along with a good bit that strikes me as misguided or ill informed, but where the book goes awry has less to do with substance than with tone. As Reinhold Niebuhr noted, if one really wants to be a prophet, one may need to be an itinerant; it is hard to hang around those who have been bludgeoned by our critique. No doubt such prophets are sometimes needed by all of us, but I wonder whether the tone of this book might not have been more successful had its author been less intent on demonstrating that those who live in ways different from his own are flawed souls—and more intent simply on depicting the goods he has found without invidious comparison with goods others enjoy.

It was after all G.K. Chesterton, whom Dreher seems to regard as one of the patron saints of his manifesto, who noted that "it is not familiarity but comparison that breeds contempt." FT

Playing Scratch-and-Win

The Scratch machine dispenses fun
in little pictures. You choose one
as flat and bright as a cartoon
of GI Joe and his platoon.
When no one sees, you take a shot
and feed the only bill you've got
that's crisp enough into the slot

And then just stand there,
deep in the thrall of a riddle, a dare,
as behind the illuminated rows,
the *deus ex machina* inside it slows,
and drops into your waiting hand
whatever fate Fat Chance has planned—
lose five bucks, win fifty grand.

Beneath the chartered camouflage,
the pink flamingos and Macaws,
you scrape away with black thumbnail,
as if it were the Seventh Seal,
or sweetheart's answer come by mail—
you're deemed a loser by those laws
no one can trespass or appeal.

Belle Randall

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sacred Spaces & Other Places

Catesby Leigh

A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art
by R. Kevin Seasoltz
Continuum, 394 pages, $29.95

Heavenly City: The Architectural Tradition of Catholic Chicago
by Denis R. McNamara
Liturgy Training, 160 pages, $59.95

It's no secret that the state of contemporary religious architecture in America is bad. Really bad. The American idea of inevitable progress runs into a brick wall when we compare the quality of our architectural output a century ago with the stuff we are building now. Every denomination's churches have suffered—but the most severe damage done by the sundry theoretical crazes of recent decades may be to Catholic architecture.

The question, of course, is why. And the answer—well, we might start by looking here:

> It was a large rectangular room with white walls, deep windows, and a stone floor; the space was devoid of any decoration. As remodeled, the only furnishings were a hundred small cuboid black stools. The disposition of the room could be easily changed for different functions. For example, if a discussion, recital, or conference were being held, the stools were rearranged as in an auditorium, but if the eucharist was being celebrated, a provisional altar was set up in such a way that the people could gather around it on three sides. The presider closed the circle by facing the community from behind the altar. The liturgy as celebrated in the space was certainly a celebration of the whole assembly; it was expressed with great simplicity and flexibility. Hospitality surely took precedence over monumentality, and the community took precedence over objects.

The space being described here is the main hall in the Schloss Rothenfels-Main, headquarters of Germany's Catholic Youth movement, as redesigned in 1928. Of course, that was long ago and in another country. But R. Kevin Seasoltz, a Benedictine liturgical scholar at St. John's University in Minnesota, insists in his new book, *A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art*, that this room deserves our emulation now, for it marks the first instance in which the "renewals in architecture and liturgy were brought together."

Architecture, did he say? What architecture? All I see from Seasoltz's description is a reduction of interior design to an anorexic conceptual exercise—and this despite the fact that its architect, Rudolf Schwarz, collaborated on this protominimalist project with a renowned liturgical specialist, Romano Guardini.

Perhaps, if even Guardini couldn't compel an ideological architect to embrace a richer sense of meaning, we shouldn't complain too much about Seasoltz. But *A Sense of the Sacred* is a deeply deceptive book, for it aims to force drastic changes upon our churches in the name of architecture—when those changes are desired above all for their political and ecclesiological effect.

The New Testament proclaims that the members of the church are the body of Christ. The original meaning of "church," or *ekklesia,* is the "called-out" community of believers, chosen for redemption. "If material edifices have any intrinsic Christian meaning," Seasoltz argues, "it is because of the community who assembles there and what they do when they are gathered—namely, hear the Word of God proclaimed, break that Word for one another, and celebrate the life,

Catesby Leigh *is an architecture critic in Washington, D.C., and author of the forthcoming* Monumental America *(Spence).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the various sacrimental rites."

Now, it is true that the primeval significance of the gathering place for Christian worship is not that of a divine domicile, as with, say, pagan temples. But it is equally true that the Christian churches—and especially the Catholic Church—has accumulated additional layers of meaning over time, layers that Seasoltz is eager to strip away. Indeed, to argue that it is *only* as a place of assembly that a Christian church building possesses a legitimate identity is to succumb to the functionalist delusion that wrought havoc on church design during the latter part of the twentieth century. And this is precisely Seasoltz's contention.

Though he is averse to any sense of unworthiness among the faithful taking part in the Mass, Seasoltz does offer an engaging historical survey of Christian liturgical practices from the earliest times, along with their physical settings. It is well known that the primeval church relied on household rooms for worship. Yet why should this require us now to build multipurpose, functionalist worship spaces like the hall at the Schloss Rothenfels-Main? By Seasoltz's own account, Christians opted for converted house churches and new church buildings with exclusively sacred uses, not to mention clearly defined sanctuaries and elaborate mural decorations, as soon as the Church's growth and relative freedom from persecution permitted.

Oddly, the theological and liturgical doctrines underpinning Seasoltz's views on sacred art and architecture do not get top billing in *A Sense of the Sacred.* That honor goes to the culture. "Certainly the church possesses an intrinsic identity of its own, but it is dependent on cultural phenomena as it seeks to give an expression of its own identity in terms that can be appropriated by contemporary people," the author avers.

A postmodern who wears his political correctness on his sleeve, Seasoltz constructs anodyne cultural identities for "primal" cultural groups—Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and, most absurdly, Asian Americans. "Primal" is academic parlance for "primitive," and these groups have ceased to be that. Nevertheless, Seasoltz needs his noble savages to make his cultural construct fly. So we are treated to memorable sentences like this one about Native Americans: "They are mysteriously devoted to nature, especially the soil—they sit on it and walk on it with their bare feet." Or this: "Africans and African American Christians are often quite aware of the various powers of evil in their lives and their environment." Needless to say, Western civilization comes in for much rougher treatment.

Of course, our culture is not primarily primal, and one does wonder about the lack of any discussion of the impact of mass media in Seasoltz's analysis. For the record, he sees the defining cultural trend of the moment as a modern-to-postmodern transition. Given the limitations or dangerous delusions of classical and modern culture, that is for the best, in his view. He acknowledges the nihilistic strains in postmodern culture. But it also entails "a return to primal culture, to nature, to the images of good and evil, and to symbols, myths and rituals that are thought to enable people not only to deal responsibly with the mystery of iniquity in human life but to triumph over that evil." The postmoderns who interest Seasoltz are thus New Age types—romantic neoprimitives, primals without the fangs.

Seasoltz's divination of the emerging cultural dispensation just happens to dovetail with his anthropological conviction that "religion and religious experience are communicated, shared, and sustained not primarily through creeds and theological statements but through symbols, myths, metaphors, and rituals." In the "emphasis on the community as the true subject of liturgical celebration," Seasoltz notes, modern Catholic scholars have seen "a sound pastoral response to the intense individualism and pragmatism of much of Western society."

Seasoltz therefore seeks to deemphasize hierarchical distinctions between clergy and people during the liturgy. He wants the faithful arranged antiphonally around the altar, with the presiders facing the people, so that all can behold the "unity of Christ's body." "Nourished" and "transformed" by the eucharistic feast, the laity will seek the transformation of the world they live in. Needless to say, Seasoltz aims to reshape the worship setting in a way that will help drive the symbolism of the Eucharist home. His formula for church design boils down to the erection of unmonumental buildings in which worshipers are not distracted from the "primary symbols" of the Eucharist—themselves—and the "cultic actions" in which they are engaged.

One big problem, Seasoltz acknowledges, is that a lot of Catholics just won't get with the program. It's as if their abhorrence of modernist churches were a replay of Galileo versus the Inquisition. "In recent times," he laments, "there has been a nostalgia for the unity and security that classical culture brought to the Roman Catholic Church." Some Catholics subject to this "nostalgia," he says, "can accommodate their lives to contemporary technology, sociology, economics, and psychology, but they want classical religion, especially as it was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

expressed in late medieval and Tridentine theology and liturgy."

Surely living in a postmodern world characterized by "a multiplicity of constructs"—by "complexity and contradiction," to employ Robert Venturi's phrase—should have reconciled Seasoltz to such untidy realities. But his "pluralism," contrary to his take on postmodernism as embracing "traditions," rejects Western artistic traditions predicated on enduring, objective forms and conventions. His "pluralism," in other words, is a sham.

Look at the photographic examples Seasoltz includes of churches and sacred artworks that reflect his design concepts, and you understand why Catholics might look to the past for better things. A Benedictine monastic church in South Carolina is an insubstantial postmodern rendition of a basilica church, the plus-sign muntins in its windows serving as anorexic symbols of the faith. Interiors of new churches in Ireland and England do not read typologically as "Catholic church" or even "church" at all, and are bound to leave the unenlightened stone cold.

In the reconfigured interior of the 150-year-old Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Milwaukee, the apse is empty apart from new organ casework, because the sanctuary—with its high altar, baldachin, and communion rail—is no more. The tabernacle has been moved to a side chapel. The former sanctuary thus resembles an orchestral platform, as befits the renovated cathedral's suitability for "nonliturgical events."

If Archbishop Rembert Weakland and the renovators in his employ wished to relieve worshipers of "distractions" from the liturgy's "primary symbols," one wonders why they hung a truly histrionic sculptural composition above the altar—which, by the way, they brought out to the crossing and surrounded with the antiphonal arrangement of chairs Seasoltz advocates. This composition consists of a very large crown of thorns taking the form of a multitude of metallic spikes, through which a skewed spike-cross with a long, thin shaft is pitched on a diagonal, with a spindly, primitivized corpus precariously tacked onto it. It is obviously a major distraction. (Seasoltz acknowledges this criticism in his text, without rebutting it.)

There is precious little beauty or transcendence on view in these photographs, and indeed Seasoltz doesn't even pretend that the new architecture they illustrate meets those criteria. It just reflects "sound liturgical theology and practice."

The bottom line on the artistic dispensation he offers seems to be that churchgoers must meekly submit to their dosage of visual castor oil. Needless to say, Seasoltz implicitly ranks himself among the mandarins duty-bound to serve it up—which makes for an intriguing contradiction between his insistence on breaking down the hierarchical distinctions between clergy and laity in the liturgy and his insistence on reinforcing those distinctions in imposing his notion of appropriately postmodern art and architecture on Catholic communities. "Good quality," Seasoltz declares, "is perceived and appreciated only by those who are willing and able to assume a contemplative distance from experience and to hear, see, touch, and taste symbols for what they truly are." Indeed, "the meaning of the cultural forms that architecture and art assume is not immediately clear because, like all symbols, the forms must be interpreted"—by the mandarins. Amid the postmodern miasma of a "multiplicity of constructs," then, a Delphic caste of artists, architects, academics, pastors, and liturgical consultants must divine which "cultural forms" are acceptable and which not. This delicious little bureaucratic formula is tailor-made to disenfranchise rather than empower the laity.

The implicit authoritarianism is even more pronounced because the design concepts Seasoltz espouses lack the objective foundation that tradition might provide. Seasoltz can offer only a terribly generic recipe for appropriate church design. "There are important elements in the liturgical environment," he writes in his conclusion, "that contribute significantly to the overall experience of mystery, especially the seating of the assembly and the placement of the major liturgical actions, as well as light, acoustics, color, spaciousness, silence, stillness, and even temporary decorations. The architectural and artistic environment is appropriate when it is beautiful, hospitable, and inviting—when it creates a certain sense of emptiness and appears to be incomplete when the celebrating assembly is absent."

The absence of specificity and concreteness in Seasoltz's design criteria underlines the fact that they are grounded mainly in subjective values like "honesty," "genuineness," and, above all, "authenticity." A new church that meets with his approval can look like just about anything—a deracinated basilica, a home, a barn, or, as with the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, an overdesigned university chem lab with a bizarre belltower and a stage for a sanctuary. Just so long as it isn't monumental and doesn't embrace principles of design that have imbued churches with meaning for well over a thousand years.

To reconcile Christians to this conceptual house of cards, Seasoltz offers an atrociously misleading account of recent developments in art and architecture. Significantly, we get very, very little infor-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mation about the churches—especially the Catholic churches—erected in the decades preceding modernism's triumph.

We're told pre-Vatican II churches in America reflected "the ethnic tastes of European immigrants." They were, "as was the custom, furnished by catalogue sale houses that catered to sentimental tastes." The unsuspecting reader might well conclude that American Catholic church design was typically of a piece with the "inferior kitsch that priests and religious regularly purchased."

Another recent book, *Heavenly City: The Architectural Tradition of Catholic Chicago*, shows just how wrong that conclusion would be. Written by Denis R. McNamara, an architecture historian and liturgical consultant at the University of St. Mary on the Lake, the large-format volume is superbly illustrated with color photographs by the British photographer James Morris. It offers nearly seventy examples of Catholic sacred architecture from 1856 to 1962. The churches are designed in a wide variety of traditional idioms: Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Byzantine, Neoclassical, Romanesque, Moderne, and even Colonial Revival. Even where flaws in design or execution are apparent, the richness of the artistic conception—especially in the interiors— shines through in one example after another.

With the advent of modern frame construction in steel or steel-reinforced concrete, Seasoltz would have us believe, "the diverse styles that were produced in the nineteenth century were in many ways simply decorative additions to architecture; the overall impression was one of rather chaotic eclecticism." Poor Seasoltz doesn't know the difference between architecture and structural engineering.

To be sure, the great majority of the churches in McNamara's book incorporated modern frame technology, though a layman would be hard pressed to tell. Frame construction allowed for larger column-free spans, permitting unobstructed views of the sanctuary that nurtured the congregation's "active participation" in the Eucharist, a Vatican II theme already sounded in Pope Pius X's 1903 *motu proprio* concerning sacred music. And that "rather chaotic eclecticism," as McNamara's book makes clear, had the signal virtue of reflecting a rich architectural heritage grounded in humanistic principles of design, a situation far preferable to the dehumanized architectural chaos so widespread in urban America today.

Among the many able architects who built the churches in *Heavenly Cities,* Joseph W. McCarthy and Henry J. Schlacks stand out for their formidable grasp of mass, proportion, and style. McCarthy was particularly inventive; his feeling for interior color and atmosphere was simply phenomenal. Later in his career he seamlessly incorporated the Moderne into grand classical designs, and he also produced churches in a simplified Gothic idiom with an unerring instinct for decorative detail.

The last church in McNamara's book—Saints Faith, Hope, and Charity—was designed by Edward J. Schulte and dedicated in 1962. Located in Winnetka, its interior features an abundance of figurative sculpture in a somewhat medieval style strikingly set against brilliantly colored stained glass with intricate but abstract patterns. Schulte's edifice has significant flaws and many virtues. It is typical of an evolutionary ethos that shaped much sacred architecture before "the spirit of Vatican II" was somehow imagined to prescribe a revolutionary approach.

This church perhaps helps explain the evident lack of concern about the state of architectural affairs in the concluding chapter on sacred art and liturgical furnishings in Vatican II's *Sacrosanctum Concilium* document. In *Heavenly City* we behold walls, vaults, domes, and stained-glass windows replete with images of the Godhead, saints, angels, and idealized natural forms and symbols. Such embellishments inspire in the faithful the sense that the liturgy conjoins the earthly and heavenly realms. However dimly, their splendor foreshadows the inconceivable majesty of the Heavenly Jersualem. The emotional response they elicit makes the faithful feel closer to God, as does the presence of the Blessed Sacrament within these churches.

Add to this the iconic presence of the church building within the community and it quite inevitably signifies not just the *domus ecclesiae* but also the *domus Dei et porta coeli.* It is true that the latter meaning is not prescribed in the New Testament. It is rather a function of deeply ingrained human instinct—an instinct that's about as "primal" as it gets—and of Catholic inculturation of human instinct in the truest sense of the word. This meaning is also entirely consistent with the Church's *institutional* identity as herald of the redemption of man and nature alike and of the life of the world to come, which identity Seasoltz fails to give its due.

Chicago's Polish immigrants, toiling away in the stockyards and steel mills, dug into their meager savings to build fine baroque churches modeled on Polish prototypes from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Because Seasoltz is hooked on a postmodern sociology of artistic production in which who produces the art, or whom the art is thought to be produced for, matters more than the art's intrinsic merit, he just can't fathom the significance of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this. It hardly mattered that the Polish aristocrats who built the prototypes presided over "a totally different kind of social order." The art in these Polish churches—such as John A. Mallin's remarkable mural painting in the dome of St. Hyacinth Basilica in northwest Chicago, with its more than 150 figures extending over nearly three thousand square feet—generally involves a decidedly baroque conception of grandeur, and the public it edified was altogether less elite than Seasoltz's sociological theory would indicate.

The magnificence is what matters, not its supposed social origin, which is why any number of the churches in *Heavenly City* have been restored, or "de-renovated," in a manner to which the mandarins of church architecture would strenuously object. *Heavenly Cities* serves as a timely reminder that the humanist tradition in architecture and art speaks to mankind, not to classes of men. It has always lent itself to new, indigenous interpretations. And the high quality of the architecture in McNamara's book is the result of the Catholic Church's sound reliance on a noble heritage.

For someone like R. Kevin Seasoltz, of course, this is a recipe for failure, and *A Sense of the Sacred* makes no mention of the traditional movement in architecture, urbanism, and fine art that has been gradually gathering force for a quarter century. The architects now picking up where McCarthy and his traditionalist contemporaries left off are doing some impressive work. It isn't easy. The postmodern regime is institutionally entrenched, and the destruction modernism has wrought on the traditional building arts and crafts, and thus on the economic underpinnings of civilized architectural practice, has been massive. One recent project that warrants mention is a chapel designed by the Washington, D.C., firm of Franck Lohsen McCrery Architects for the ninety-year-old St. Joseph's Cathedral in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The chapel's glory is the new twenty-seven-figure mural painting in the sanctuary, *Christ Revealing His Sacred Heart Amongst the Heavenly Host with Assembled Saints and Blesseds,* by Leonard Porter.

One source of Seasoltz's problem with traditional architecture is theology—faulty theology. The symbolic power of the Eucharist is very likely impaired when the "primary symbols" are "persons" or the "community" rather than the consecrated Host—anonymously grouped with "things" in Seasoltz's lexicon. The Real Presence in the bread and wine is conceptually compact and intimately expressive of Christ's sacrifice. But when the community is "the true subject of liturgical celebration," the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist is easily obscured and the door opened to a ritual exercise in self-esteem enhancement or even a not-so-subtle form of idolatry.

Another part of the problem has to do with fashionable artistic theories getting in the way of common sense. There's an elementary reality a great many Catholics have long since grasped, if only intuitively: Adherence to tradition generally yields a far higher return on creative effort than does the negation of tradition. Reconnecting Catholic architecture to its ancient heritage will help preserve the liturgy. It might even help preserve architects' sanity, or what's left of it. FT

Rejection Note for *Paradise Regained*

Loved that first book—it's got no equal—
but, Johnny, we don't love your sequel.
If you would only take a chance
on self-help or a gay romance,
we'd let you keep your last advance.
Phony conspiracies would do
if you could find a hook or two—
like someone famous who won't sue.
Marketing knows you'll see the light,
and thinks Da Vinci is just right.

Michael Juster

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Tsars & Commissars

Russian Conservatism and Its Critics: A Study in Political Culture
by Richard Pipes
Yale University Press, 216 pages, $30

Reviewed by Daniel J. Mahoney

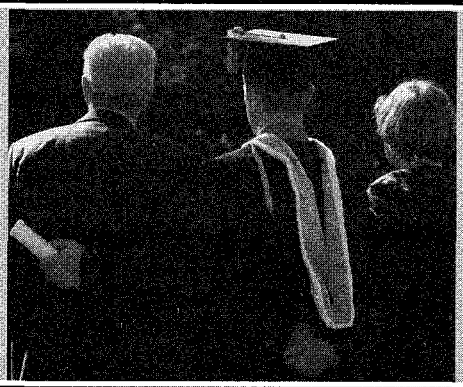
The Soviet Union was the world's first experiment in totalitarianism, the twentieth century's contribution to the political experience of humankind. That particular system, with its numerous offshoots and satellites, lasted more than seventy years and wreaked havoc on a third of the human race.

Its best analysts—such as Czeslaw Milosz, Robert Conquest, and Alain Besançon—agreed in calling it an "ideocracy" because of its inhuman effort to govern according to utopian ideological criteria almost wholly disconnected from the lived experience of humankind. The forcible imposition of ideological categories on humanity inevitably gave rise to a perverted social order based on violence and lies. This project drew powerful impetus from the radical Enlightenment's dream of a fully "rational" society purged of tradition, human spontaneity, and "monkish superstition." Not surprisingly, then, Communist regimes were treated indulgently by progressive intellectuals, who saw them as the true completion of democracy and the fulfillment of the noblest aspirations of modern rationalism.

The totalitarianism of the Communist sought to realize this philosophical promise through an unprecedented assault on the traditional contents of life. Lenin, the

Daniel J. Mahoney *is professor of political science at Assumption College and co-editor of* The Solzhenitsyn Reader: New and Essential Writings, 1947-2005, *forthcoming from ISI Books.*

The *future* never needed
the *past* more than it does today.



Imagine a world enlivened by the wisdom of Socrates, Aristotle, Cicero, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Dante, Shakespeare, Madison, Cardinal Newman and T.S. Eliot...

Imagine shaping the future with a legacy gift today.

Please remember the College in your will.
For more information, contact Tom Susanka,
Director of Gift Planning, at 800-634-9797.

THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE
Santa Paula, California

www.thomasaquinas.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

father of the Soviet state, provided a bone-chilling defense of revolutionary despotism: The task confronting the new order was to "purge Russia of all sorts of harmful insects."

These insects included religious believers, the bourgeoisie, all the aristocracy, any property-owning peasants or "kulaks," and the independent-minded socialists who refused to sever socialism's remaining connections with Western humanism and the liberal and democratic cause.

The Bolshevik regime thus tried to build a caricature of modernity through forced industrialization and a frontal assault on the traditional foundations of the Russian way of life: the peasantry, an independent intelligentsia, and the Orthodox Church. Anywhere between twenty and thirty-five million human beings perished between 1917 and 1956 as this project unfolded.

Alexander Yakovlev has described that assault with grace and controlled indignation in his magisterial 2002 *A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia*. As Martin Malia argued in a series of profound books, culminating in his 1999 *Russia Under Western Eyes*, there was nothing distinctively Russian about this nihilistic assault on the very pediments of civilized order.

Revolutionaries who had no experience of the old Russian regime or the currents of Russian history replicated a nearly identical pattern of ideological despotism from "Petrograd to the China Seas."

Something more universal and more fundamental was at stake than the hovering specter of Ivan the Terrible or the authoritarian legacy of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century tsars. Communism belongs to universal history.

But there have always been those who have seen in Soviet communism nothing more than the atavistic residue of an authoritarian past, a modernized form of "Asiatic despotism." Many on the Left so argued in order to save Marxist theory from being permanently discredited by its association with Soviet practice.

This recourse to the concept of Oriental despotism drew on the intellectual prestige of such thinkers as Montesquieu and Hegel, who painted evocative portraits of a fearsome social order in which the despot alone is free and where nothing limits or constrains

JOSEPH MITCHELL AND THE FREE LIFE
A One Day Symposium

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Jubilee Hall Auditorium

Saturday, May 13, 2006 • 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

A Celebration of the Life and Work of Joseph Mitchell
The Great Prose-Poet of New York Life

Sponsored by the **G.K. Chesterton Institute for Faith & Culture**
with generous support from the **Earhart Foundation**

FEATURING:

Professor Kenneth T. Jackson, Columbia University, Director of the Herbert H. Lehman Center for the Study of American History, editor of the *Columbia History of Urban Life* and author of *Empire City: New York through the Centuries* and numerous other scholarly work, on "Joseph Mitchell's New York: The Life of the City, 1929-1996."

Nancy Franklin, Calvin Trillin, Mark Singer and Adam Gopnik – Writers from *The New Yorker* magazine on "Remembering Joe Mitchell's Sixty Years at *The New Yorker*"

Professor Daniel H. Strait, Asbury College, Wilmore Kentucky on "Making Room at *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon*"

Professor Dermot Quinn, D.Phil (Oxon), Seton Hall University, Department of History, on "Joseph Mitchell and the Free Life"

Andrew J. Willner, Executive Director of NY/NJ BAYKEEPER – Readings from *The Bottom of the Harbor* by Joseph Mitchell

Walsh Library Gallery – exhibition of photographs by Therese Mitchell, with text by Joseph Mitchell and curated by Nora Sanborn

CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

For further information or to register, e-mail *chestertoninstitute@shu.edu* or *nourseda@shu.edu*, or call (973) 275-2525.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his power. The distinction between Western civic culture and the monolithic somnolence of eastern despotism is also central to Marquis de Custine's famous 1839 critique of Russian autocracy ("Journey from Russia"), a critique that became newly fashionable during the heyday of the Cold War.

Not ideocracy, then, but the residue of tsarist autocracy became the interpretive key to gaining access to the radical otherness of the Soviet universe. Rather than being known as the model of a revolutionary regime, Soviet communism was seen as essentially alien to the Western political experience. For the members of this school, Lenin and Stalin were essentially tsars who justified their abuses of power with revolutionary slogans that they did not understand or really believe.

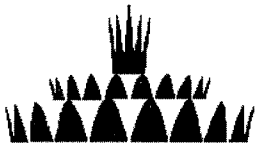
Much the same was said of Mao in China, who was often compared by sinologists to the Chinese emperors of distant millennia (this despite Mao's determined efforts to destroy traditional Chinese culture during the decade-long "Cultural Revolution"). As a result, both enlightenment thought in general and Marxism in particular were spared from any guilt by association with the monstrous ideocracies that claimed them as an inspiration.

The distinguished Harvard historian and Russianist Richard Pipes is the contemporary doyen of this Orientalist approach. His latest book, *Russian Conservatism and Its Critics: A Study in Political Culture*, is an impressive but deeply flawed study of the Russian conservative tradition. In it, Pipes insists that Russia is "fated" to be ruled by Red or Black, revolution or reaction, and that no middle path is available to this forlorn people. Pipes thus designates Russia and the Russian political tradition the permanent European instantiation of Asiatic despotism. The key to unlocking the Russian enigma is what Pipes calls "patrimonial despotism." Invoking Montesquieu and Hegel as well as Marx himself, Pipes defines patrimonialism as a social arrangement where sovereignty and ownership are radically collapsed and where the "owner-ruler had no notion that his subjects had legitimate interests of their own."

Pipes previously developed this notion in such important works as *Russia Under the Old Regime* (1974) as well as in his classic two-volume study of the Russian Revolution, *The Russian Revolution* and *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime*, and his wide-ranging 1999 investigation of *Property and Freedom*. At times, Pipes concedes that the Communists united revolutionary utopianism and Russian patrimonialism in a toxic mix that created an unprecedented form of despotism. At other times, though, he dismisses the novelty of Communist totalitarianism and sees in it a thoroughly reactionary regime that owes far more to the legacy of the most fearful and despotic tsars than its does to authentic revolutionary ideology.

In a recent op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal*, Pipes went so far as to say that the Soviet Union "was a reactionary regime which had more in common with the autocracy of Nicholas I or an Alexander III than with the socialist ideals of the radical intelligentsia." He thus suggests that there is no fundamental discontinuity between the Russian and Soviet experiences.

At other times, however, he renews the argument of conservative-minded political thinkers such as Edmund Burke or Alexis de Tocqueville who, in their day, excoriated intellectuals for their abstract or literary politics. In some respects, then, Pipes is a conservative critic of revolutionary fanaticism.



SAINT LOUIS ABBEY

A Benedictine Monastery of Catholic priests and brothers

Is the Lord calling you to join us

- in exploring the mystery of God in prayer;
- in living a common life;
- in the work of teaching or administration in an outstanding college preparatory school for boys, grades 7 through 12?

For more information, go to **www.stlouisabbey.org**

or contact: Father Ralph Wright, OSB • Saint Louis Abbey
500 South Mason Road • Saint Louis, MO 63141
Tel: 1-800-638-1527 or 1-314-434-5774
Email: frralph@priory.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And yet, this turns out to be a decidedly secondary note in his work as a whole. To be sure, he was an honorable opponent of the Soviet regime. But his suspicions of Russia run far deeper still. Pipes' one-sided emphasis on patrimonialism as the "cause of causes" finally lacks all sense of proportion. He has an essentialist conception of the Russian past and present that leaves little room for responsible moral or political agency. He thus fails to incorporate the facts and legitimate insights that abound in his rich but one-sided historiography of things Russian.

In *Russian Conservatism and Its Critics*, Pipes broadens his focus to encompass what might be called the "ideological defense" of patrimonialism. If most Western scholars have concentrated on the liberal and revolutionary strands of Russian political thought, Pipes focuses on what he sees as the dominant conservative strain in Russian political culture. And since the character of conservatism is largely determined by particular historical situations, Pipes identifies Russian conservatism with a self-conscious defense of patrimonial autocracy.

He thus draws the sharpest possible contrast between the Western political tradition and what he perceives as the fundamentally *statist* character of Russian politics and Russian political reflection.

If Western politics gradually evolved toward a well-articulated affirmation of formal and informal limits on state power, the Muscovite state increasingly conflated ownership and sovereignty in a manner that defines patrimonial despotism.

Now, Pipes is undoubtedly right that the liberties that flourished in medieval Russia (such as urban *veches* or councils) were superseded in the early Muscovite period by a new political order where the tsar spoke of the nation as his "estate" and the people as his servants and serfs. Still, he repeatedly downplays the significance—and even the reality—of any fundamental departure from his patrimonial understanding of the relation between rulers and ruled.

Pipes, for instance, ably chronicles how, at crucial moments in the intellectual debates of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the "pro-autocracy party prevailed" over those who wished to affirm significant legal and spiritual restraints on the political authority of the tsarist state.

But these dissenting voices never lost out altogether as they might

Our Lady and the Church

by Hugo Rahner, S.J.

"This marvelous work is one of the most important theological rediscoveries of the 20th century."
— Pope Benedict XVI

"Extraordinarily instructive"
— *First Things*

"A truly illuminating and wondrous book"
— Fr. Shane Tharp

152 PAGES • $10.95 • PAPERBACK
AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL CATHOLIC BOOKSELLER
OR ORDER ONLINE:
WWW.ZACCHEUSPRESS.COM

PHONE ORDERS: 1-970-416-6672
M-F, 9AM-4PM, M.S.T.

Mental illness. You never know whom it may strike, but you'll always know where to turn.

Mental illness, like cancer or heart disease, is a fact of life for millions. Like these other diseases, early detection and aggressive treatment are often the keys to years of productive living. *Treated early, this illness can be managed.*

Rose Hill Center offers residential treatment and rehabilitation for adults, ages 18 and up, with schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder and other major mental illnesses. A professional mental health team directs a comprehensive schedule of innovative programs aimed at helping people achieve and maintain psychiatric stability, meaningful daily activity and independent living.

Rose Hill has made a profound difference in the lives of hundreds of families. Phone 1-866-504-2259 (toll-free). www.rosehillcenter.com.

ROSE HILL

Hope can be found at Rose Hill Center.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well have in a genuinely despotic state. Pipes is in his element in describing "reactionary" thinkers and statesmen such as the historian Nicholas Karamzin (1766-1826) and the jurist and procurator general of the Orthodox Church under Alexander III, Konstantin Pobodonostev (1827-1907), who defended unalloyed autocracy on a variety of philosophical, theological, and political grounds.

These men were indeed theorists of something resembling patrimonialism. They recognized no limits above the will of an autocrat whose responsibility was to preserve the unity of the Russian empire against both foreign threat and revolutionary contagion.

But Pipes' thesis is undermined by evidence that he himself provides. Many defenders of the autocratic ideal sharply distinguished between despotism and the moral responsibilities of a Christian monarch.

On the other hand, Slavophiles may have been blind to the defects of the peasant commune and were no doubt prone to romanticize the actual operation of autocracy in nineteenth-century Russia.

But they were eloquent defenders of *glasnost* (openness) and recognized the need for a sharp demarcation between the responsibilities of a state requires and the freedoms and obligations inherent in any civil society.

PIPES' DESCRIPTION of the growing power of societal opinion in nineteenth-century Russia belies the description of Russian autocracy as an Asiatic despotism dominated by the caprice of a single ruler.

Pipes also notes that many reform-minded Russians supported autocracy as a means of introducing greatly needed changes and of holding a vast empire together. Such a prudential defense of autocracy has little or nothing in common with support for despotism or arbitrariness *per se*.

Pipes acknowledges the far-reaching changes introduced by Tsar Alexander II after 1860. The tsar not only abolished serfdom but introduced trial by jury and an independent court system. He liberalized the universities and created a *zemstvo* system of local and provincial self-government. But Pipes faults Alexander II for defending the principle of autocracy—as if it is necessarily coextensive with despotism—and for resisting pressures to give Russia a constitution.

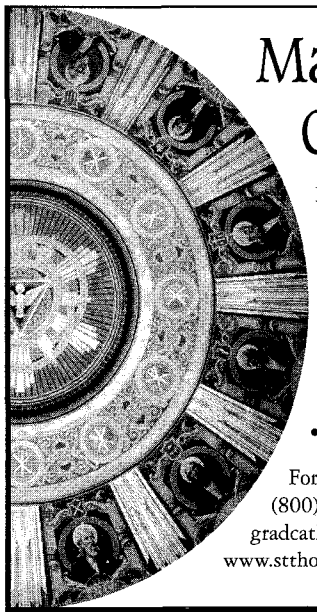
In fact, the tsar was about to approve a national advisory council (where representatives of local government would be invited for consultation) when he was assassinated by revolutionary terrorists in 1881. Pipes is equally critical of men such as D.M. Shipov (1851-1920).

The head of the *zemstvo* movement on the eve of the first Russian Revolution of 1905, Shipov sharply distinguished between autocracy and despotism. Shipov thought that left-liberal constitutionalists of his

HOW TO PUT FIRST THINGS IN YOUR WILL

After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put FIRST THINGS in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. Bequests are free of estate tax, and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government. You can give needed support for FIRST THINGS by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to the Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010 (insert amount being given here) to be used to support the ministry of FIRST THINGS.* A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name FIRST THINGS as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living.

It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.



Master of Arts in Catholic Studies

Pursue an advanced course of study that provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary understanding of Catholicism and of the Catholic intellectual tradition. We offer:

- Full- or part-time studies
- Small class sizes
- Evening and summer courses
- Study abroad in Rome
- A joint degree in Catholic Studies and Law

For more information, contact:
(800) 328-6819, Ext. 2-5703
gradcath@stthomas.edu
www.stthomas.edu/cathstudies/firstthings

UNIVERSITY of ST. THOMAS
MINNESOTA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time made too much of rights and gave too little thought to the responsibilities of citizens and rulers alike.

This Christian of deep conviction favored an enhanced *zemstvo* system and defended the principle "To the tsar, power, to the nation, opinion."

Shipov's intriguing mix of autocracy, self-government, and separate spheres for state and society appears merely incoherent to Pipes.

But by lumping the likes of Pobodonotsev and Shipov into a unitary conservative tradition, Pipes conflates the most liberal-minded defenses of autocracy with support for a truly "patrimonial" social order. Not only does Pipes fail to make the requisite distinctions, but he continually understates the profound changes that occurred in Russia between 1860 and 1917. As Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has pointed out, all of these constructive developments came "crashing down in 1917."

Pipes and Solzhenitsyn share a deep admiration for Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin (1862-1911), the outstanding political figure of the late tsarist period. Both Solzhenitsyn and Pipes agree that "Stolypin was a sophisticated conservative liberal, the last of his breed." Stolypin supported the constitutional order established in 1906 and treated "society's elected representatives as equals." He introduced far-reaching agrarian reforms that aimed to create a class of independent peasant proprietors in Russia and championed local self-government as the best means to promote civic consciousness among the people.

As Pipes notes, Stolypin did everything within his power to "lay the social foundations of constitutional autocracy in Russia." He used the full powers of the state to crush revolutionary terrorism without showing any nostalgia for the discredited authoritarianism of the past.

But while Solzhenitsyn endorses a neo-Stolypinite agenda for contemporary Russia and believes that the great statesman might have led his country to civic salvation if he had not been assassinated in 1911(perhaps even returning to power after 1914 to save his nation from impending disaster), Pipes sees Stolypin instead as a tragic figure whose noble project was doomed to failure from the very beginning. For Pipes, patrimonialism is Russia's fate, and not even the most enlightened statesmanship can free her from her authoritarian destiny.

Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts

Lilly Fellows Program
Valparaiso University
1401 Linwood Ave.
Valparaiso, IN 46383

Nominations are invited for the inaugural
LILLY FELLOWS PROGRAM BOOK AWARD

Founded in 1991, the Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts, based at Valparaiso University, seeks to strengthen the quality and shape the character of church-related institutions of learning for the twenty-first century.

The annual Lilly Fellows Program Book Award honors an original and imaginative work from any academic discipline that best exemplifies the central ideas and principles animating the Lilly Fellows Program. These include faith and learning in the Christian intellectual tradition, the vocation of teaching and scholarship, and the history, theory or practice of the university as the site of religious inquiry and culture.

Works under consideration should address the historical or contemporary relation of Christian intellectual life and scholarship to the practice of teaching as a Christian vocation, or to the past, present, and future of higher education. Single authored books or edited collections in any discipline, published in 2004 or 2005, are eligible.

A prize of $3000 will be awarded at the Lilly Fellows Program National Conference, Oct. 13-15, 2006

Letters of nomination are due to the Lilly Fellows Program May 31, 2006

For nomination procedures and further information visit:
http://www.lillyfellows.org/lfpbook_award.htm

Light the Path to Holiness . . .

AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY

Institute for Pastoral Theology

Master of Theological Studies

A Graduate Program in Pastoral Theology, Rooted in the Catholic Tradition, & Designed for the Non-Traditional Student

Our Commitment:
- Theological Education – Formation of Mind
- Spiritual Formation – Conversion of Heart
- Pastoral Orientation – Prudential Wisdom

Format:
- One weekend a month
- August – May
- Three-year cycle

Now Accepting Fall 2006 Applications
through May 15 for classes offered at these sites:
Phoenix, AZ
Naples, FL – Orlando, FL
Green Bay, WI – Janesville, WI
St. Louis, MO – Kansas City, MO

AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY

1025 Commons Circle, Naples, FL 34119
Toll Free: 866-866-1100 *Fax:* 239-280-2527
Email: ipt@avemaria.edu *Web:* www.ipt.avemaria.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pipes claims to find powerful support for his thesis in Russia's current political trajectory. He sees in Putin an aspiring despot and believes that Russia is on the verge of plunging once again into full-fledged authoritarianism.

But does the evidence support such a catastrophic view? "Managed democracy" in Russia certainly leaves much to be desired. Putin has certainly done little or nothing to support vigorous local self-government. He has consolidated the state's control of national television while allowing hundreds of independent newspapers and radio stations to flourish. (It should be noted that two of the biggest programs on state television in Russia over this year are productions of the anti-totalitarian classics *First Circle* and *Doctor Zhivago*.)

To his credit, Putin has had the courage to challenge the criminal oligarchy and he has had some success in marginalizing the Communist party. He has also gone some way to restoring the confidence of many ordinary Russians in their nation's future after the predatory capitalism of the 1990s.

At a minimum, Putin's Russia is less autocratic than, for instance, Pilsudski's authoritarian regime in 1930s Poland. His government should certainly be taken to task when it is tempted to pursue an overtly authoritarian path. But what—we must ask—does this have to do with some innate propensity of Russians, and apparently Russians alone, to authoritarian governance?

It is that aspect of Pipes' thesis that borders on contempt for the Russian people. Regretfully, *Russian Conservatism and Its Critics*, like many of Pipes' earlier writings, reads too much like an indictment of Russia itself rather than an attempt to distinguish between better and worse features of her national patrimony.

The Lilliputian Imagination

Life in the Undergrowth
by David Attenborough
Princeton University Press, 288 pages, $29.95

Reviewed by John Wilson

There's an ancient human dream to be tiny: to make a hammock from a leaf and sup on nectar, to soar on a falcon's back. This longing turns up in the folklore of fairies and the wee people, and its guises are sometimes charming, sometimes malign. Patrick Leigh Fermor tells of Voodoo adepts who allegedly "reduce themselves to infinitesimal size and go rolling about the countryside in calabashes," intent on dark mischief. Jonathan Swift tapped into this deep vein of fantasy in *Gulliver's Travels*—hence, against the grain of his satiric intent, the children's editions that consist largely of Gulliver's adventures in Lilliput.

Thanks to the marvels of technology it is now possible to live this dream in another way. Flipping through the pages of a beautifully produced study of fossil invertebrates from Princeton University Press, I came across a Silurian trilobite that might have provided a breastplate for an archaic pre-Lilliputian warrior. Better yet, on the dust-jacket of David Attenborough's splendid *Life in the Undergrowth*, a creature that turns out to be a damselfly appears to be sizing up the reader as it pauses, front legs arrested in a judo-like stance, perhaps interrupted at tea. Enormous blue eyes frame a satisfyingly alien face, fringed by spiky, hair-like tufts and elegantly arched antennae. The effect is to suggest an encounter, one consciousness meeting another.

John Wilson *is editor of* Books & Culture.

Attenborough has been exploring the natural world for decades in a succession of BBC documentaries and accompanying books. *Life in the Undergrowth*, the companion volume to a series that aired in Britain late last year, focuses on invertebrates. In practice, while he does give some attention to scorpions and slugs and other assorted spineless creatures, Attenborough is principally concerned with insects.

Like several recent books in the same vein (Thomas Eisner's *For Love of Insects* and Piotr Nasrecki's *The Smaller Majority*, for example), Attenborough's *Life in the Undergrowth* explicitly sets out to change the way in which people see and think about all manner of creeping things that creepeth upon the earth, as Leviticus puts it, and some that fly, too.

"We are greatly prejudiced by our size," Attenborough writes. "We find it very difficult to believe that an animal that is many thousands times smaller than ourselves can have anything in any way comparable to our own motives, or to experience [*sic*] anything that resembles our basic emotions of fear and hunger, let alone aggression or sexual excitement. And until recently science abetted such thoughts. Bees and blowflies, beetles and butterflies were mere automata, mindless robots reacting automatically to the simplest stimuli. To credit them with anything else was unjustified and scientifically disreputable anthropomorphism."

Attenborough overstates a bit in his passion to make his case. A creature "many thousands times smaller than ourselves" would be very tiny indeed. Imagine the female wolf spider, for example (shown carrying her young in a cluster on her abdomen), ten times

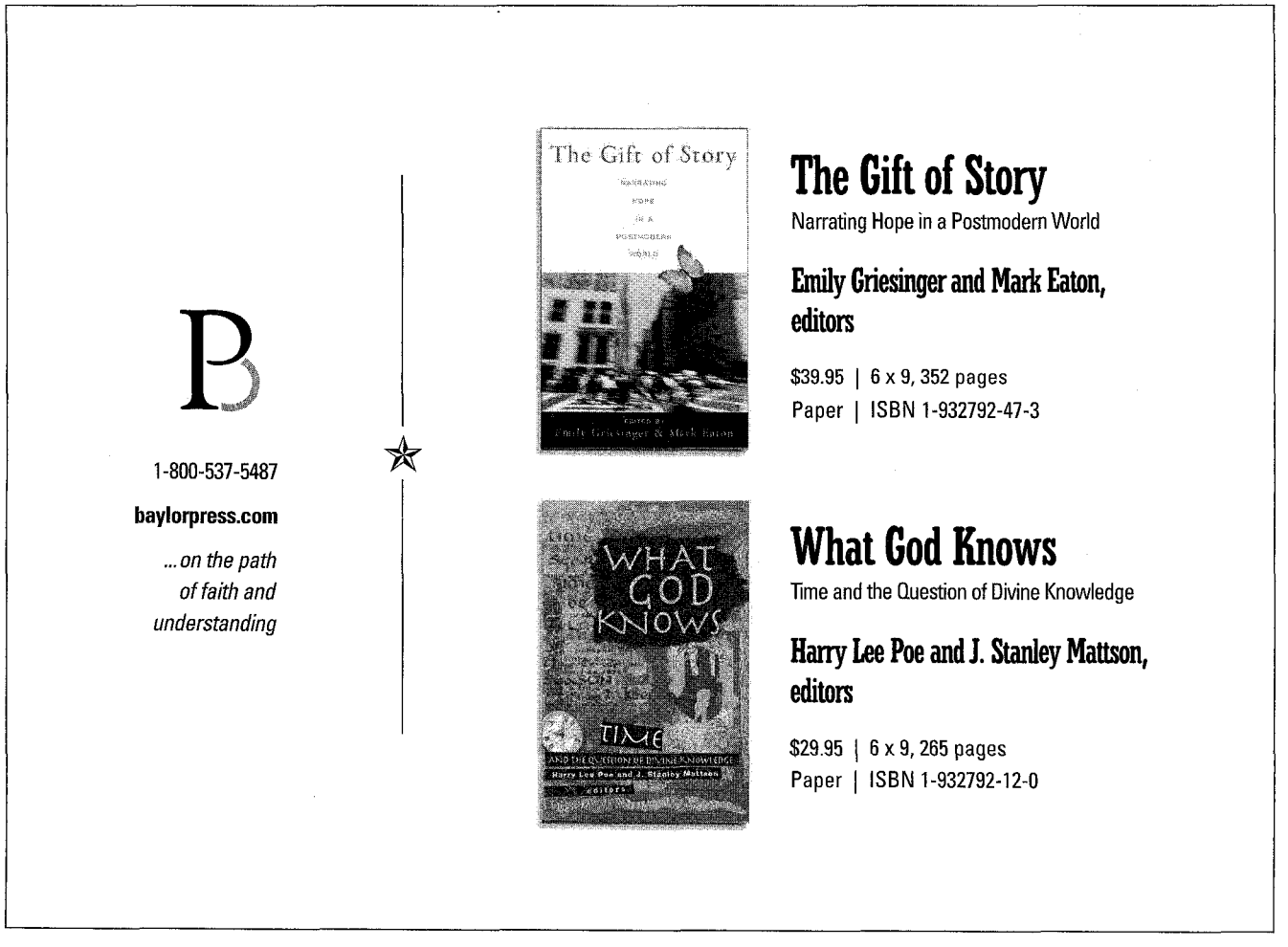
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her normal size. You would not want to meet her crawling on your bed. Then imagine her enlarged by ten again. At a hundred times her normal size, she is a vision from a nightmare.

No doubt it is true that one component of the average human's low regard for insects has to do with "size prejudice." This must give some of the force to the insult—"Insect!"—that one comes across now and then in old novels, especially translations from French, where the intent is to belittle the victim, impressing him with his utter insignificance. But we have to set against this the *fascination* of the small, so that in itself, the size of insects doesn't explain much about human attitudes toward them. And yes, Attenborough is right to suggest that the perception of insects as "automata" is a factor, too—though Jonathan Edwards, who wrote a treatise on spiders as a teenager, was sure that they took pleasure in being borne aloft on the filaments they had spun.

Oddly, though, Attenborough doesn't go on to consider other prejudices that he will need to counter if he is going to make his case. Return for a moment to the female wolf spider. The lumpy white ball in which she carries her babies has a texture that most people would find disgusting. Many of the creatures superbly photographed in *Life in the Undergrowth* have qualities that provoke repulsion. In *The Smaller Majority,* Piotr Nasrecki argues, not very persuasively, that such reactions are largely learned rather than instinctive, but at least he addresses the question.

Attenborough aims to persuade first through the detail and intimacy of his account of insect life: the female bumble bee's patient construction of the chamber in which she lays her eggs; the cooperative relationship between African acacias and the ants that make "mansions" in the "bloated and hollow" bases of the tree's protective spines (and sting the muzzles of grazing predators, driving them away); the cunning design of the mole cricket's burrow, which amplifies the male's mating song so that, "on a windless night, he can be heard from nearly half a mile away." The


1-800-537-5487
baylorpress.com
...on the path of faith and understanding
The Gift of Story
The Gift of Story
Narrating Hope in a Postmodern World
Emily Griesinger and Mark Eaton, editors
$39.95 | 6 x 9, 352 pages
Paper | ISBN 1-932792-47-3
WHAT GOD KNOWS
TIME
What God Knows
Time and the Question of Divine Knowledge
Harry Lee Poe and J. Stanley Mattson, editors
$29.95 | 6 x 9, 265 pages
Paper | ISBN 1-932792-12-0

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book is packed with such deftly rendered observation.

Occasionally, Attenborough steps back from his narrative to frame it in some way. One recurring theme is the evolutionary "success" of insects. In an earlier book-cum-documentary, *The Life of Birds,* he awarded the laurel to birds as the most "successful" creatures on Earth.

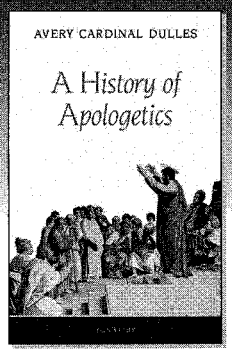
Here we read of insects that they are "by far the most successful and varied of all invertebrate groups." The idea seems to be that insects compel respect because they have survived and indeed flourished (with the implication, I suppose, that less successful life-forms merit contempt).

On other occasions, the appeal is aesthetic: "In the whole animal kingdom there are no life cycles more complex and improbable than those that involve insects." And finally, in Attenborough's peroration, there is a curious conceit that seems to be popping up all over these days: "Were mammals to disappear from the earth, the forests and their myriad invertebrate inhabitants would continue to flourish as they have done for more than four hundred million years. But were those invertebrates to disappear, the earth's ecosystems would collapse. . . . Dung and corpses would no longer be recycled. The creatures that perform these essential services are still around us, unnoticed in the undergrowth. Many are within a few inches of our feet whenever we tread on earth, usually unregarded. We would do well to remember them."

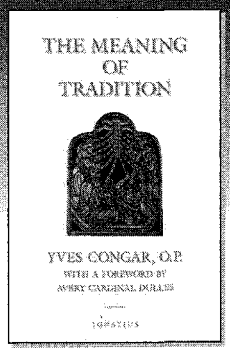
Well, yes. And if a catastrophic cosmic event were to make the earth uninhabitable for the creatures that currently dwell on our planet, the rocks would continue to flourish as they have for a very long time. Then they would be *really* successful.

Somehow, in setting out to restore a sense of proportion, a much needed reminder that life exists outside the television screen and the computer monitor and the printed page, Attenborough has gotten tangled up in unexamined contradictions. Even as he's evoking insect life in terms that recall the domesticity of *The Wind in the Willows,* he wants to write about the natural world as if he had access to it independently of our perception of it in human terms—as if he were capable of seeing the Insect-in-Itself instead of the insect as seen by a man.

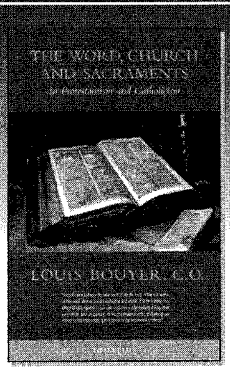
CLASSIC WORKS GREAT AUTHORS



A History of Apologetics
Avery Cardinal Dulles
Dulles provides a masterful overview of Christian apologetics, from its beginnings in the New Testament through the Middle Ages and on to the present resurgence of apologetics among Catholics and Protestants alike. Dulles shows how Christian apologists have at times both criticized and drawn from their intellectual surroundings to present the reasonableness of Christian belief.
HOA-P . . . 420 pp, Sewn Softcover, $18.95



The Meaning of Tradition
Yves Congar, O.P.
Congar masterfully explains why Tradition is an in-escapable aspect of a fully biblical Christian faith. He explores the various forms of Tradition and discusses its relationship to Scripture, as well as the role of the Magisterium of the Church. Congar clears up misconceptions on this subject.
MOFT-P . . . 175 pp, Sewn Softcover, $14.95



The Word, Church and Sacraments In Protestantism and Catholicism
Louis Bouyer, C.O.
This theological classic seeks to foster unity and deeper understanding among Christians by comparing the Catholic and Protestant views of Scripture, Church authority, and the Sacraments. Bouyer contributed greatly to Vatican II's efforts to promote Christian unity.
WCSPC-P . . . 101 pp, Sewn Softcover, $9.95

WWW.IGNATIUS.COM

ignatius press

P.O. Box 1339, Ft. Collins, CO 80522 • 1 (800) 651-1531

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But the encounter suggested by the extraordinary cover photograph is illusory. We can see a damselfly, but who knows what the damselfly sees? We imagine the encounter as if we were reduced to his Lilliputian scale, but there is no natural world in which such an encounter could take place. It happens in the human imagination.

Attenborough emphasizes the great continuum of life, capacious enough to include insects and humans both, but fails to acknowledge that we value insects not because we are like them—we seek food and sex as they do, we have offspring, we work together and fight, we die—but because we are different, different from them and from all other creatures even as we are akin. He knows this, no doubt, but there's no place for it in his cobbled-together system where evolutionary success and reverence for life uneasily coexist.

And where, by the way, is the tsetse fly? Why in this book is there so little reckoning with the fearsome damage insects do to humans? There is only one human face in *Life in the Undergrowth*. It is the face of a young man in Senegal, in the midst of a swarm of locusts, "consuming every edible plant in their path," the caption says. The young man is smiling—admiring, perhaps, the locusts' great skill.

As Attenborough writes, "Insects were not only the first creatures into the air, but to this day no other organisms exploit the freedoms and opportunities of that world with greater virtuosity than they do."

If I had any influence on seminary education, I would like to see a course where students read some first-rate theology of creation—along with Attenborough and Eisner and Nasrecki, and maybe E.O. Wilson on ants thrown in for good measure. Too much talk about Creation is divorced from the messy particulars. Too much talk about insects is divorced entirely from their Creator. It would be good to bring them together.

Thirty-third Annual

Lonergan Workshop

JUNE 18-23, 2006 BOSTON COLLEGE

CELEBRATING THE 450th JESUIT JUBILEE

Speakers and Presentations(among others):

Peter Bisson, SJ: *The Jesuit Apostolate of Justice & Peace*
Kevin Burke, SJ: *Ignacio Ellacuria, SJ* • Frank Braio: *Vincent Potter, SJ*
Richard Cassidy: *Avery Cardinal Dulles, SJ*
Ivo Coelho, SDB: *Francis. Xavier & the Problem of Missions Today*
Robert M. Doran, SJ: *Ignatian Themes in Lonergan*
Glenn "Chip" Hughes: *Gerard Manly Hopkins, SJ*
John W. Howard, SJ: *Peter Faber* • Paul Kidder: *William Richardson, SJ*
Stephan Loos: *European Jesuits & the Modernist Controversy*
Colin Maloney: *Lonergan & Ignatian Discernment*
Gilles Mongeau, SJ: *Thomas Aquinas & Lonergan*
Elizabeth Murray: *Feelings & Discernment in the Church Fathers*
Edward T. Oakes, SJ: *Hans Urs von Balthasar* • John Robertson: *Ben F. Meyer*
Gordon Rixon, SJ: *Ignatius Loyola* • Leo Serroul: *Teilhard de Chardin, SJ*
Roman A. Siebenrock: *Karl Rahner, SJ* • Michael Vertin: *Joseph Marèchal, SJ*
João Vila-Cha, SJ: *Walter J. Ong, SJ* • Nikolaus Wandinger: *Raimond Schwager, SJ*

Also, a celebration of the publication of *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authorship of Insight* with William Mathews, SJ and of Frederick Crowe, SJ's *Christ and History: The Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935-1982* with Robert M. Doran, SJ.

Fred Lawrence, Director, 21 Campanella Way #346, Theo. Dept.
Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467 lawrence@bc.edu
617.782.7319(H, eve.), 617.552.8095

We're all on the same page here (literally).

The Humanities course brings the entire student body together to study the classic texts each morning, so that freshmen are literally on the same page as seniors.

"Thomas More may be the closest thing now existing to the tiny 'colleges' which grew up at Paris and Oxford in the Middle Ages and nourished such thinkers as Thomas Aquinas and Ignatius Loyola."
-Choosing the Right College, 2006

The Thomas More College of Liberal Arts
MERRIMACK, NEW HAMPSHIRE • ROME, ITALY
WWW.THOMASMORECOLLEGE.EDU
(800) 880-8308

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Beginning of the Journey

EDITH STEIN: A PHILOSOPHICAL PROLOGUE 1913-1922
by ALASDAIR MACINTYRE
Rowman & Littlefield, 224 pages, $25.95

Reviewed by Thomas S. Hibbs

IN THE SUMMER OF 1921, while visiting friends, Edith Stein chanced upon the autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila. Reading through the night, she completed an important stage in her own intellectual and religious development. She decided to become a Catholic and to follow the path of St. Teresa into the Carmelites.

Now, with *Edith Stein: A Philosophical Prologue 1913-1922*, Alasdair MacIntyre has written a remarkable intellectual biography of Stein that ends, rather than begins, with her conversion.

The author of such influential books as *Marxism and Christianity*, *After Virtue*, and *Dependent Rational Animals*, MacIntyre is not writing hagiography but a "philosophical prologue" to a conversion—though that carefully chosen word *prologue* invites thoughts about the life that Stein would lead after her conversion.

Edith Stein has much to say about reason and faith, the nature of conversion, the relation of phenomenology to Thomism, and the understanding of philosophy as a way of life. In Stein, MacIntyre detects an exemplary philosophical life, not so much in the conclusions reached but in the questions formulated and the integration of thought and life. MacIntyre opens with a reference to the ancient genre of "Lives of the Philosophers," and MacIntyre's account of Stein's life is a contribution to that venerable genre: a counter to the trivializing relegation of philosophy to the professionalized and specialized world of academia, which too often reduces the life of a philosopher to salacious gossip.

MacIntyre's book is at once an example of, and yet transcends, the contemporary philosophical impulse to recover what philosophers call the "situatedness of thought." He does indeed locate Stein—a female, Jewish philosopher who was killed at Auschwitz and canonized as a Catholic saint—in the context of her Jewish upbringing, her philosophical apprenticeship under Edmund Husserl, and her growing awareness of German nationalism and its attendant anti-Semitism.

But the book is not finally about the background history of Edith Steon's intellectual development. Instead, it defends a thesis about the unity of thought and life and about Stein's own life as an embodiment of a certain form of philosophical life.

MUCH CONTEMPORARY philosophical biography involves unmasking scandal. Among modern philosophers, Martin Heidegger is the most widely mentioned case—and the comparison of Heidegger with Stein illustrates the centrality of truthfulness in the attempt to think clearly about how thought and life might be integrated.

At various points, MacIntyre offers tantalizing comparisons of Stein and Heidegger, whose lives have intersecting but opposed trajectories. Heidegger began as a Catholic, studied with Husserl, abandoned Husserl to embark on a radical deconstruction of traditional metaphysics, and ended up an ally of the Third Reich. Edith Stein began as a practicing Jew, turned to atheism, studied with Husserl, struggled to move beyond the limitations she detected in Husserl's phenomenology, became a Catholic, moved toward traditional metaphysics, and was executed by the Nazis at Auschwitz.

But MacIntyre's *Edith Stein* also concerns the history of modern Thomism, to which MacIntyre has since the early 1980s himself been a contributor. In his 1990 book *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, MacIntyre argued that, by making epistemology into first philosophy, certain strains of Thomism inevitably dissolved into a number of competing schools. Of course, MacIntyre does not think that Thomism can simply seal itself off from modernity. Instead, what is needed is a way of engaging modern philosophy without succumbing to its epistemological assumptions.

One possible way to address this problem is through the kind of phenomenology that Edmund Husserl began. MacIntyre does a nice job of introducing the reader to the central philosophical issues in phenomenology and its development out of the history of modern philosophy. While many modern thinkers lined up in defense of the two lines of modern thought that were developed from David Hume and Immanuel Kant, Husserl objected to what Hume and Kant shared: an atomistic and punctual account of experience as consisting of easily isolated sense impressions.

HUME, FOR INSTANCE, inventoried sense impressions and declared that he could detect no clear impression corresponding to such common philosophical notions such as substance or cause and effect. We perceive, Hume famous-

THOMAS S. HIBBS *is distinguished professor of ethics and dean of the honors college at Baylor University. His books include* Virtue's Splendor *and* Shows About Nothing: Nihilism in Popular Culture from The Exorcist to Seinfeld.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly asserted, only contiguity in time and place: We never have a sense impression of some thing causing another thing, just of one thing happening after, and adjacent to, another event.

To Husserl, this looked less like an accurate description of experience and more like the result of a peculiar sort of analysis.

To counter Hume's reductionist analysis, Husserl offered a meticulous descriptive account of experience, sensitive to the complex ways in which objects are given to us as actual or potential wholes—and as inextricably intertwined, especially in their actions, with other objects. We do not experience fire, paper, and then ashes; we experience fire actively consuming paper and reducing it to ashes.

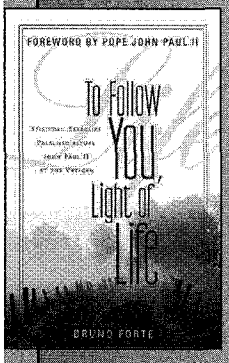
What attracted so many young scholars to the Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* (1900) was the sense that he had rescued philosophy from an impasse into which the lines of David Hume and Immanuel Kant had driven it. Instead of Kant's insistence that we know only appearances, that things in themselves remain hidden to us, the shibboleth of phenomenology was, "To the things themselves."

Yet when Husserl released his later book *Ideas* (1913), he seemed to have retreated from things themselves to ideas and to have lapsed from realism back into idealism. As Edith Stein wrote, "All of us had the same question on our minds.

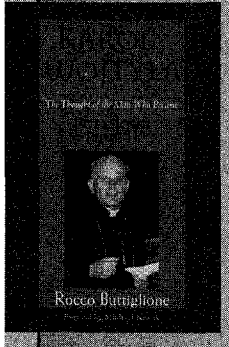
The *Logical Investigations* had caused a sensation primarily because it appeared to be a radical departure from critical idealism which had a Kantian and neo-Kantian stamp. Knowledge again appeared as reception, deriving its laws from objects not, as criticism has it, from determination which imposes laws on the objects. All the young phenomenologists were confirmed realists. However, the *Ideas* included some expressions which sounded as though the Master wished to return to idealism."

In his penchant for depicting reality as utterly mind-dependent or intentional, Husserl created notorious problems for himself, concerning (a) the role of the human body in our acts of knowing and (b) our awareness of, and communication with, other persons—the famous problem of intersubjectivity. As MacIntyre sees it, Husserl's thought embodies

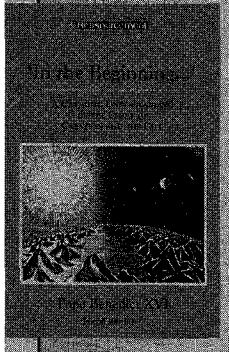
BOOKS *from* **EERDMANS**



TO FOLLOW YOU, LIGHT OF LIFE
Spiritual Exercises Preached before John Paul II at the Vatican
Bruno Forte
Foreword by **Pope John Paul II**
A little more than a year before his death, Pope John Paul II gathered his closest aides for an extended retreat at which Bruno Forte offered a series of meditations. Now collected in this lovely book, these meditations draw us into the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and orient us toward the mission of the church.
ISBN 0-8028-2935-X · 202 pages · paperback · $22.00



KAROL WOJTYLA
The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II
Rocco Buttiglione
"An excellent study, exhaustively detailed, of the intellectual development and significant achievements of Karol Wojtyla from his student days to his election to the chair of Peter. The book is essential reading for those who hope to understand fully the theological teachings of his pontificate."
— *First Things*
ISBN 0-8028-3848-0 · 400 pages · hardcover · $35.00



'IN THE BEGINNING. . .'
A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall
Pope Benedict XVI
"A source of light to many priests and religious educators who are seeking the deeper meaning of the biblical truths of dependence or of the Sabbath rest or who are looking for an answer to the claim that God's mandate 'Fill the earth and subdue it' is responsible for the shameless exploitation of the earth that we have witnessed." — *Liguorian*
ISBN 0-8028-4106-6 · 112 pages · paperback · $13.00

At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521
www.eerdmans.com
5529 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
255 Jefferson Ave. S.E. / Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

two distinct and incompatible philosophical positions.

MacIntyre does a marvelous job of reconstructing all this historical context for Stein's philosophical journey.

He takes up, for example, the little-known Adolph Reinach, a student of Husserl's and one of Stein's teachers. Reinach shared Stein's worries about latent idealism in Husserl, and, ahead of Stein, he saw the import of the social conditions of certain types of acts of knowing: those involved in making promises, for instance.

Among Stein's own philosophical contributions to phenomenology, her work on empathy stands out, particularly for the problems concerning embodiment and intersubjectivity. Stein's graduate thesis, "On the Problem of Empathy," bears all the marks of an early, incomplete work, where the questions and suggestions for further research are in many ways more significant than the conclusions established.

Still, her focus on empathy brings to the fore precisely those constituting conditions of human experience and knowledge that Husserl was always in danger of suppressing or at least pushing to the margins: the way in which first-person accounts of experience can be changed by alternate third-person accounts, the way in which our sense of ourselves and of others as embodied persons is crucial to the experience of empathy, and the way our self-understanding is frequently mediated by third-person recognition.

MacIntyre detects the overlap of Stein's life and thought as her philosophical interests in empathy and the social conditions of knowledge, on the one hand, match her desire to participate in the right sort of community, on the other. Stein concerned herself with such fundamental practical questions as: To what sort of community do I owe allegiance? And with what sort of others should I be in dialogue?

It is not surprising that her decision to become a Catholic was nearly indistinguishable from her decision to join a religious order.

MacIntyre rightly sees that Stein's conversion is a disruption of philosophy. Indeed, given the limitations in her philosophical resources and her lingering disagreements with Husserl, it is not clear how she could have proceeded philosophically.

But MacIntyre also suggests that her conversion provided the seeds for future progress on precisely the lingering questions that Stein was unable to resolve from within Husserlian phenomenology. From Stein herself, MacIntyre derives the observation that large-scale changes in belief are less a matter of organic development of latent possibilities than of an "otherworldly" influence that could not be predicted or compelled.

MacIntyre compares Edith Stein's conversion to that of a number of her contemporaries (Reinach's conversion to Protestantism, Rosenzweig's to Judaism, and Lukacs' to Marxism) to show that the gap between Stein's philosophical prelude and her religious conversion does not imply that the meaning of "conversion" is reducible simply to "the adoption of beliefs beyond reason." One can undergo a conversion from one set of rationally held beliefs to another set, or from irrationality to faith in reason. Moreover, the most dramatically compelling conversions are those that enable individuals to understand, if only retrospectively, what they could not before.

One of the matters on which Stein had clearly made some progress before her conversion was in her thought about German nationalism.

MacIntyre makes a convincing case that Stein moved beyond a crude patriotism in the German *Volk* to a more democratic conception of government, even as she became gradually aware of the rising currents of anti-Semitism in her country. Her analysis of the way what she calls "contagion" can sweep over the masses and render a people susceptible to irrational social currents looks remarkably prescient.

Here, too, MacIntyre makes a case for Stein's exemplary integration of thought and life, with her ability not so much to come to peremptory conclusions but to think through questions, both theoretical and practical, and to adopt a corresponding way of living.

And this returns us to the comparison of Stein with Heidegger. MacIntyre puts the question, to which Stein's life is the answer, thus: "What would it have been in that period of German history in which Heidegger grew up, served his philosophical apprenticeship, and became the most influential of twentieth-century German philosophers to have lived quite otherwise as a philosopher, to have consistently taken seriously both the implications for one's life outside philosophy of one's philosophical enquiries and the implications for one's philosophy of one's other activities?"

Edith Stein is a splendid philosophical book, whose significance over time may come to rival that of *After Virtue*. That it should also constitute a compelling prelude to theology, indeed, to hagiography, goes some measure toward confirming Thomas Aquinas' paradoxical claim that philosophy can both have its own integrity and function as a handmaiden of theology.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Road from Damascus

Paul of Tarsus: A Visionary Life
by Edward Stourton
Paulist, 224 pages, $24

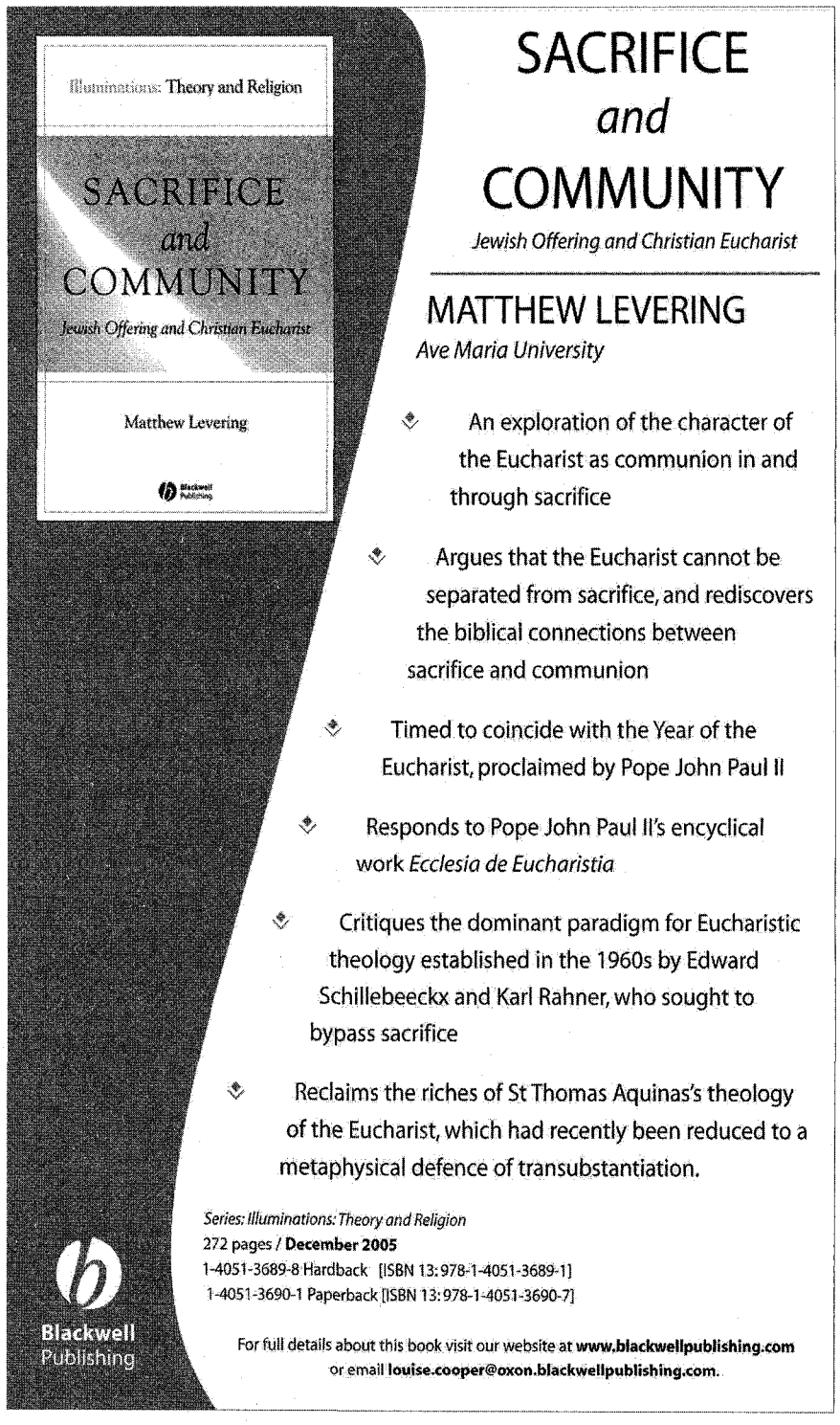
Reviewed by Edward T. Oakes, S.J.

St. Paul is, to put it mildly, a controversial figure. Among Jews, Paul tends to grate on sensibilities even more than does Jesus. Actually, as to Jesus, one can detect a rapprochement, however wary, on the part of several Jewish scholars. This development is largely the result of New Testament scholarship in the past century, which has consistently shown how Jewish Jesus was, how much he conducted his earthly ministry inside the presuppositions of intertestamental Jewish apocalypticism, and how much his ethical teaching drew from common prerabbinic themes. But Paul still remains the sticking point.

Edward Stourton, author of this new biography, *Paul of Tarsus: A Visionary Life*, is by no means an expert in the field of Pauline scholarship. Until recently he was a journalist for the BBC whose beat included the Middle East. But his experience as a journalist in the cauldron of today's theological politics has given him a unique perspective, and a considerable part of his biography—the most interesting part, in fact—recounts the reactions of contemporary non-Christians (and even some Christians) to the Apostle Paul.

Those reactions are uniformly harsh. Part of the problem is that Paul's thought is so volatile, expressing a theological worldview that is bound to strike the untrained reader as maddeningly baffling. Take, for example, this line: "I was once alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be the death of me. For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me" (Romans 7:9-11). If, as Paul said two chapters earlier, sin and death had already entered the totality of the human race with Adam, how can he claim to have ever been alive apart from the law? And if we are justified by

Edward T. Oakes, S.J., teaches theology at the University of St. Mary of the Lake.


Illuminations: Theory and Religion
SACRIFICE and COMMUNITY
Jewish Offering and Christian Eucharist
Matthew Levering
SACRIFICE and COMMUNITY
Jewish Offering and Christian Eucharist
MATTHEW LEVERING
Ave Maria University
An exploration of the character of the Eucharist as communion in and through sacrifice
Argues that the Eucharist cannot be separated from sacrifice, and rediscovers the biblical connections between sacrifice and communion
Timed to coincide with the Year of the Eucharist, proclaimed by Pope John Paul II
Responds to Pope John Paul II's encyclical work Ecclesia de Eucharistia
Critiques the dominant paradigm for Eucharistic theology established in the 1960s by Edward Schillebeeckx and Karl Rahner, who sought to bypass sacrifice
Reclaims the riches of St Thomas Aquinas's theology of the Eucharist, which had recently been reduced to a metaphysical defence of transubstantiation.
Series: Illuminations: Theory and Religion
272 pages / December 2005
1-4051-3689-8 Hardback [ISBN 13: 978-1-4051-3689-1]
1-4051-3690-1 Paperback [ISBN 13: 978-1-4051-3690-7]
Blackwell Publishing
For full details about this book visit our website at www.blackwellpublishing.com
or email louise.cooper@oxon.blackwellpublishing.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

faith and not by works, how can he seem to claim the opposite in this passage: "All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous" (Romans 2:12-13)?

STOURTON IS NOT much help in guiding the reader through these famous Pauline conundrums, but he quotes from them often enough to make the reader aware of what a disturbing influence this man from Tarsus has been—and to Christians, too. In fact, the first great heresy in the Church, Marcionism, was merely an exaggeration of Paul. For Marcion (a second-century priest) was convinced that Paul was the only apostle who really understood Christ's meaning in history, and saw Judaism—centuries before Nietzsche or Hitler—as the bane of the human race, the representative religion of the counter-god of vengeance and resentment in eternal rivalry with the Supreme God of mercy and goodness, the God of Jesus.

This heresy was condemned and eventually died out, but the bubbling, churning volatility of Paul's letters was still percolating through the Church. No surprise, then, that when corruption in the late-medieval Church reached intolerable levels, Paul was there as the dynamite to blow up the edifice of medieval Christendom, to such an extent that even today ecumenical discussions between Catholics and Protestants inevitably grind down to round-and-round exercises in the exegesis of Paul's letters.

One lesson that comes through Stourton's book is that, at least for Paul, biographies do not get us very far. What is most missing from this biography is any insight into the rabbinic logic that animates Paul's worldview, the kind of insight available in W.D. Davies' *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* or E.P. Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. New Testament scholarship over the past sixty years has been stressing Paul's Jewish background just as much as it has been focusing on Jesus' Jewish background, although one gets little sense of that research in Stourton's book. Absent that sense, all that Stourton can provide, in true journalistic manner, is a set of vignettes, which, though fascinating in themselves, tell us more about contemporary impasses to interreligious dialogue than they do about Paul.

Early on, for example, Stourton quotes Daniel Schwartz, a professor of Jewish history at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who accuses Paul of setting Jesus over against Moses in a way never intended by Jesus himself.

According to another Israeli, Rabbi David Rosen, most Jews "don't have the emotional or psychological capacity to look with objectivity" at Paul. Finally, Yossi Klein Halevi, a journalist for the newsmagazine *Jerusalem Report*, accuses Paul of the same unfairness that the world press exploits when reporting on events in Israel: "Outsiders will eavesdrop on our own, internal debate, extract the criticism by Israelis, and present that as a judgment against the State of Israel. . . . [Similarly] Paul is the one who takes this internal conflict [in first-century Judaism] and allows the rest of the world to eavesdrop on it."

THE MUSLIM DOCTRINE of revelation, which treats both Old and New Testaments as provisional and now completely superseded by the Koran, has meant that for most of Islamic history very few Muslims bothered with the issues raised by biblical scholarship. But multiculturalism has prompted at least some Muslims to take up the challenge of arguing (and not just asserting) their doctrine of revelation. According to the Qur'an, Christians distorted Jesus' identity as one of God's prophets by altering the text of the revealed Word that God had given them. For those Muslims who want to argue the point, the complaints about Paul are, so to speak, a godsend. For have not Christian scholars themselves shown that Paul was the one who "turned Jesus into a god"? Do not Paul's letters predate the Gospels, which themselves must have been written with Paul's theology in mind? No wonder, then, that Zaki Badawi of the Muslim College in London describes Paul as "the principal obstacle to greater harmony between Christians and Muslims."

Friedrich Nietzsche, too, could not abide Paul—though obviously not because Paul undermined the strict monotheism of Judaism and Islam, but because he made Jewish morality universal. It was the Jews, Nietzsche wrote, "who, with awe-inspiring consistency, dared to invert the aristocratic equation (good = noble = powerful = beautiful = happy) and to hang on to this 'inversion' with all their strength." If not for Paul, Nietzsche claims, this inversion would have remained the ethic of a few isolated and resentment-filled tribes in the Levant, with no effect on the happy Hellenes. But Paul introduced Jewish slave-morality into the Gentile world, thereby undermining the aristocratic Romans from within and infecting all of Europe with Jewish decadence.

And how did he manage this? By distorting Jesus' real message (and here Nietzsche oddly agrees with all those Jews and Muslims, and some liberal Christians, who hold that Paul distorted the meaning of Jesus' ministry); as he says with his characteristic ferocity in *The Anti-Christ*: "In Paul we encounter the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Loome Theological Booksellers

ONE OF THE LAST OF THE GREAT BOOKSHOPS IN THE WORLD

Purchase from our vast holdings in several ways:

✔ **Monthly Email Catalogs** - Brief, focused lists of a small selection of recent arrivals. Sign up for these FREE catalogs at www.loomebooks.com.

✔ **Printed Catalogs** - Substantial catalogs (800 titles or more) with the best of our holdings in areas like hagiography, Eastern Christianity, liturgical texts and studies, biblical studies, etc. Send an email to books@loomebooks.com to subscribe to this FREE printed catalog.

✔ **Visit www.loomebooks.com** - Here you can browse more than 15,000 titles, leave your book requests, and purchase some of the most moderately priced out-of-print scholarly theological titles on the internet.

✔ **The Old Fashioned Personal Visit** - Loome Theological Booksellers resides in a 100-year old former Swedish Covenant brick church on a quiet street in scenic Stillwater, Minnesota. Here you can browse among the tens of thousands of books that are not yet online. Pilgrims visit us from all over the world. Some stay for hours, some make it a several-day exploration.

Call us for any help we can give you to plan your visit (651-430-1092)

Loome Theological Booksellers
320 4th St. N.
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-430-1092
651-439-8504 (fax)
books@loomebooks.com
www.loomebooks.com

antithesis of the 'bringer of glad tidings': the genius of hatred, of the inexorable logic of hatred. *What* did this dysangelist not sacrifice to his hatred! The Redeemer above all; Paul nailed him to *his* cross. The life, the example, the teaching, the death, the meaning, and the right of the entire gospel—nothing was left once this hate-obsessed false-coiner had grasped what alone he could make use of."

IF READERS SUSPECT that such hatred belongs more to Paul's critics than to Paul himself, their suspicions will be amply confirmed by perhaps the most disturbing passage of all in Stourton's biography, where he quotes from Hitler's table talk: "Hitler is a prominent name on the long list of those who believe that Paul distorted the purity of the original Jesus message, although his particular angle on this idea is more eccentric than most. 'It is certain,' he told his inner circle of admirers one lunchtime in October 1941, 'that Jesus was not a Jew.' Hitler bizarrely suggests that he was the son of a Roman legionnaire who became 'a popular leader who took up his position against Jewry.' Paul, by contrast, Hitler saw as very much a Jew with a Jewish agenda, someone who exploited Jesus' authority and corrupted his teaching for his own purposes."

In Stourton's reading of these deeply stupid views, it almost seems as if Hitler's mad foray into Russia in the summer of 1941 was the result of his grotesque interpretation of Paul: "In another of the conversations recorded in *Table Talk* Hitler declares that the coming of Christianity was the 'heaviest blow that had ever struck humanity.' That remark was made on the night of July 11, 1941, just after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union: 'Bolshevism is Christianity's illegitimate child. Both are inventions of the Jew,' he added for good measure. So Paul is really responsible for pretty much everything that Hitler believed was wrong with twentieth-century Europe . . . and he even labeled [Paul's] beliefs 'crypto-Marxist.'"

One cannot help but notice how all these objections share one common formal feature—the claim that Paul distorted Jesus. But in their practical import, they are so wildly contradictory that one must wonder just what it is that sets people off so when they come to read the letters of this zealous missionary to the Roman world. Might not accusations of Paul's fanaticism come from the fanaticism of his accusers?

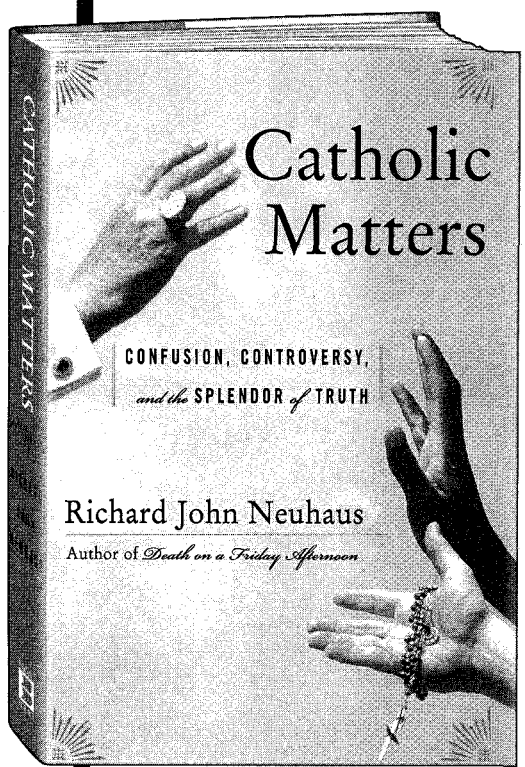
NOR HAVE I YET mentioned another theme of this biography: the way Paul grates on the prejudices and convictions of the typical secular liberal, who usually regards this far-traveling Odysseus of the Christian gospel as a curmudgeonly scold, the patriarchal rabbi who condemns homosexuality, insists that women wear veils (how Islamic!), and once returned a slave to his master without so much as a nod to slavery's injustice.

In other words, what Paul has become—for non-Christians especially, but also for too many Christians—is a kind of Rorschach test that tells us more about the reactor than it does about the configuration of the inkblot. Admittedly, it takes extremely dedicated work to understand the complexities of his thought, but without that effort all we get is little more than a chronicle (and a much disputed one at that, given the controversy over the historicity of the Acts of the Apostles).

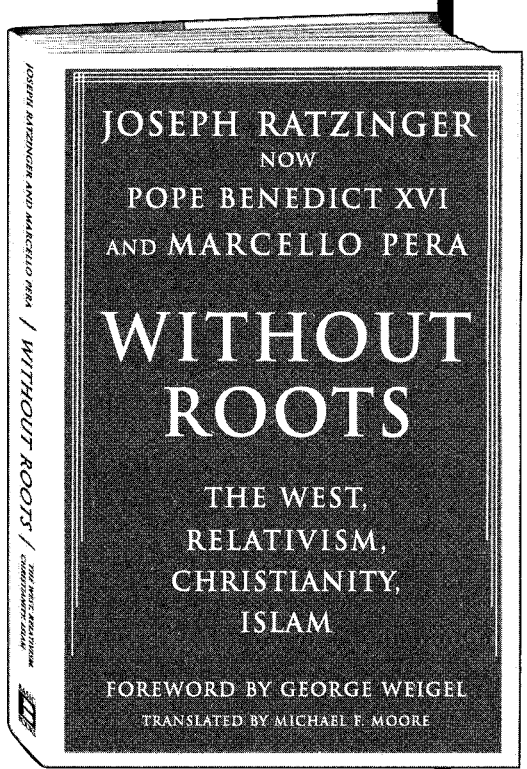
Or, in Stourton's case, all we get is a survey of contemporary heated reactions to this controversial rabbi turned Christian. But at least he leaves the reader wondering if accusations against Paul stem from the unexamined prejudices of his opponents.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CATHOLIC STRENGTHS for Today's World


CATHOLIC MATTERS
Catholic Matters
CONFUSION, CONTROVERSY, and the SPLENDOR of TRUTH
Richard John Neuhaus
Author of Death on a Friday Afternoon

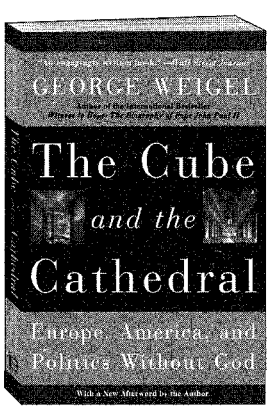
"WRITING WITH ELOQUENCE, DEEP INTELLIGENCE AND WIT, Father Neuhaus guides us past all the confusion and controversy and lets the splendor of truth shine through." —Peggy Noonan, author of *John Paul the Great*

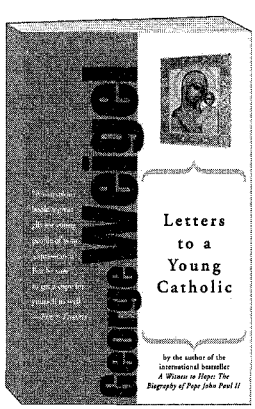

JOSEPH RATZINGER AND MARCELLO PERA / WITHOUT ROOTS / THE WEST, RELATIVISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM
JOSEPH RATZINGER
NOW
POPE BENEDICT XVI
AND MARCELLO PERA
WITHOUT ROOTS
THE WEST, RELATIVISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM
FOREWORD BY GEORGE WEIGEL
TRANSLATED BY MICHAEL F. MOORE

CAN A CIVILIZATION EXIST WITHOUT ANY SENSE OF THE SACRED?

Written together with the president of the Italian senate, Joseph Ratzinger's *Without Roots* is a timely examination of the spiritual, cultural and political crisis facing the West.

NOW IN PAPERBACK FROM GEORGE WEIGEL





THE CUBE AND THE CATHEDRAL
Europe, America, and Politics Without God
"A finely honed reflection on post-Christian Europe." —*Weekly Standard*

LETTERS TO A YOUNG CATHOLIC
"A marvelous book; a great gift for young people of your acquaintance. But be sure to get a copy for yourself as well." —*First Things*

Wherever books are sold **Basic Books** A member of the Perseus Books Group

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Briefly Noted

The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Tradition
By Huston Smith
HarperSanFrancisco, 160 pages, $22.95

Written toward the end of a long career dedicated to the study of religion—his *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions* has been a staple on college syllabi since it first appeared in 1958—this book has a definite valedictory feel. In the prologue, Huston Smith uses the story of a former student's discovery of Plato's allegory of the cave as a means of introducing the human hunger for something ultimate. In the coda, he speaks fondly of the joy he took in writing the book, and he reminisces about his childhood training by Methodist missionary parents, "which prepared [him] to tell the Christian Story from the inside." Smith also clearly sees this slender book as a personal testimony to his Christian faith. An extended introduction shows why people today are spiritually hungry and states the author's intention "to keep the Christian story from going out." The title, then, should be understood as Smith's own highly personal understanding of how Christianity is true within the frame of his larger understanding of the world's religions as great wisdom traditions. The book does not really present "the voice of first millennium Christianity" or make much of an argument toward "restoring the great tradition" (as the subtitle suggests it might). The most intriguing, and also most problematic, part of the book is the section devoted to "the Christian World-View," on which, Smith declares, "the Christian Story is stretched like a canvas on a frame." Here Smith argues for what he might call "the soul" of all religion: a view of reality that is open to the infinite and to the revelation of the divine. He concludes with "the world is perfect, and the human opportunity is to see that and conform to that fact," and immediately adds, "If this doesn't sound distinctively Christian, the reason is that it isn't. It is the worldview of all authentic, which is to say revealed, religions." It is difficult to avoid the implication that what is authentic in Christianity is its

Is This Call For You?

The Benedictine Monastic Life Intern Program at Portsmouth Abbey is a unique opportunity to live and learn about monastic life, teach classes and consider the possibility that ***This Call May Be For You.***

Experience the well-balanced life of a Benedictine monk, including daily common prayer, spiritual reading, work and time for rest and exercise in a beautiful seaside location on the shores of Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island.

If you are a college educated, single, Catholic man, aged 20-45, you are invited to apply for our 10-week teaching internship at Portsmouth Abbey School, the nation's leading coeducational Catholic Benedictine boarding school.

Call Dan McDonough at 401.643.1255
(*mcd@portsmouthabbey.org*) or email Father Ambrose at
fatherambrose@portsmouthabbey.org

PORTSMOUTH ABBEY SCHOOL
285 Cory's Lane Portsmouth, Rhode Island 401.683.2000
visit our website: *www.portsmouthabbey.org*

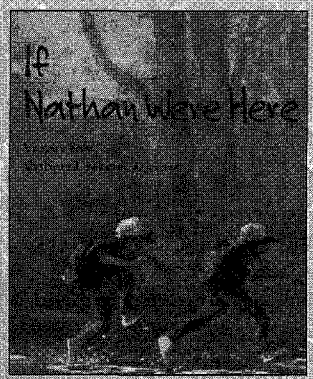
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When Death Comes. . .

"While I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die."
— LEONARDO DA VINCI

These timeless books speak to adults and children in the midst of pain and tragedy. Far from providing easy answers, they offer careful words of comfort and point forward to the day when death will be defeated.

for children. . .



At your bookstore,
or call 800-253-7521
www.eerdmans.com

6085 WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503

LAMENT FOR A SON
Nicholas Wolterstorff

"A simple, honest, and poignant expression of one man's grief. . . . A true gift to those who grieve and those who, in love, reach out to comfort."
— HENRI J. M. NOUWEN

"Read him, and again, I say unto you, please read him."
— MARTIN E. MARTY

ISBN 0-8028-0294-X · 111 pages · paperback · $10.00

THIS INCOMPLETE ONE
Words Occasioned by the Death of a Young Person
Edited by **Michael D. Bush**

"Even if we cannot rejoice ourselves, we still hear an entirely different voice rejoice. . . . This voice speaks about the completion of even this incomplete one, about his completion as God's servant brought about through death. It speaks about peace and joy and life to the fullest."
— KARL BARTH, *from the book*

ISBN 0-8028-2227-4 · 176 pages · paperback · $12.00

DEATH AND THE REST OF OUR LIFE
John Garvey

"A thoroughly engaging work that is both personal and profound. I was moved and inspired."
— SIDNEY CALLAHAN

ISBN 0-8028-2918-X · 96 pages · paperback · $10.00

IF NATHAN WERE HERE
Written by **Mary Bahr**
Illustrated by **Karen A. Jerome**

"A warm, sensitive story of how one little boy is encouraged and supported to find his own way to remember his best friend."
— *BOOK PAGE*

Ages 5 and up · 32 pages
ISBN 0-8028-5187-8 · hardcover · $16.00
ISBN 0-8028-5235-1 · paperback · $8.00

THE GOODBYE BOAT
Written by **Mary Joslin**
Illustrated by **Claire St. Louis Little**

"This is a beautiful little book; its simplicity and feeling will touch children who have lost a loved one."
— *BOOKLIST*

All ages · 28 pages
ISBN 0-8028-5186-X · hardcover · $16.00

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"soul," that is, the ways it agrees with other revealed religions, and that Christianity's "body"—all the ways it is distinct and particular—serve more to obscure than reveal the truth. Although Smith says many fine things that will be helpful especially to seekers like his former student, the book does not stand up well to a rigorous examination of its argument.

— *Luke Timothy Johnson*

Pius XII, the Holocaust and the Revisionists
edited by Patrick J. Gallo
McFarland, 218 pp., $39.95

This slim volume of essays adds to the growing literature defending Pope Pius XII against charges that he was complicit in the Holocaust. The editor, Patrick J. Gallo, a professor of political science at New York University, writes that much of the literature that attacks the pope is historically deficient and greatly overhyped. Gallo believes that authors who have been critical of the Vatican's wartime conduct (such as John Cornwell, Susan Zuccotti, Robert Katz, James Carroll, and Daniel Jonah Goldhagen) selectively cite evidence to fit their preconceived theses, often rely heavily on one another's work, and end up recycling the same misguided conclusions. "Historical complexity is lacking in many revisionist accounts," Gallo observes. "Most revisionists fail to place events in context or else selectively quote the participants and dismiss out of hand eyewitness testimony that would provide a contrary account to theirs. Their approach to the subject matter is not rooted so much in history as in an ideology that overtakes objective historical inquiry." Gallo himself contributes five original essays in the book. In the first and longest essay, he provides an excellent overview of the controversy and shows how the pope's reputation has suffered at the hands of revisionist authors. In subsequent chapters, Gallo discusses the Vatican's 1933 concordat with Germany, the pope's active support for the German Resistance against Hitler in the early months of the war, the Vatican's response to the round-up of Roman Jews in 1943, and the Nazi massacre of 335 civilians in the Ardeatine Caves outside of Rome in 1944 (which the revisionists have also blamed on the pope's supposed indifference and inaction). Gallo draws from a wide range of primary and secondary sources to back up his arguments and conclusions, which are sound and persuasive. The other chapters in the book are previously published essays, book reviews, and book excerpts. The contributors include Ronald J. Rychlak, Matteo Luigi Napolitano, Robert Lockwood, Kenneth Whitehead, George Sim Johnston, Justus George Lawler, and Joseph Bottum. Rychlak finds that Goldhagen's book, *A Moral Reckoning*, contains no original research and draws exclusively on secondary sources that advance his anti-Catholic thesis. Napolitano, who has examined many of the new documents that were released from the Vatican archives three years ago, critiques Peter Godman's misuse of these new materials in his book *Hitler and the Vatican*. According to Napolitano, the documents that have been gradually emerging from the unsealed archives establish the Vatican's opposition to Hitler and Nazism. Although much of the information in *Pius XII, the Holocaust and the Revisionists* should be familiar to knowledgeable readers, the book's contributors successfully separate the actual facts from the propaganda that has been marketed as scholarship in recent years and strengthen the case for the defense.

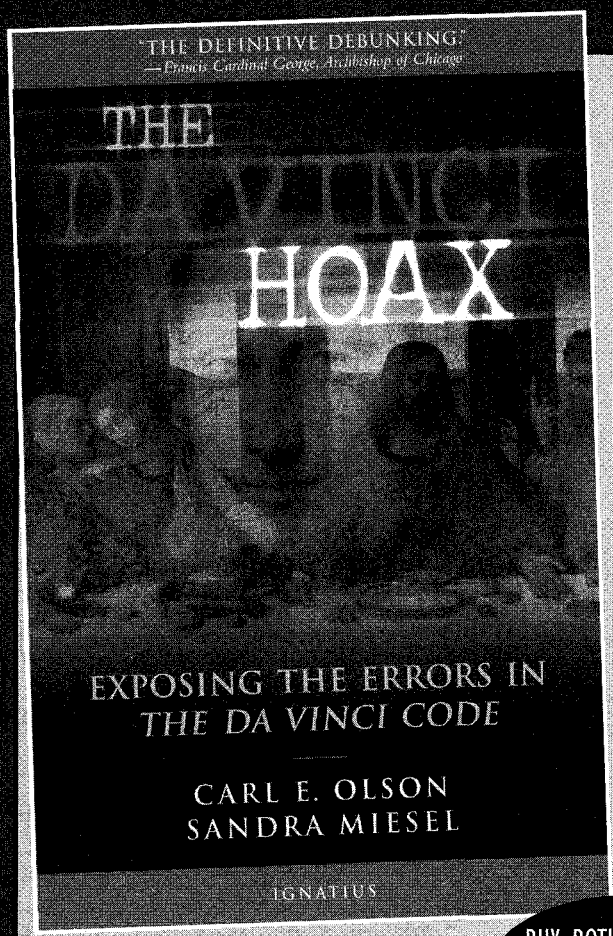
—*Dmitri Cavalli*

Acts
by Jaroslav Pelikan
Brazos, 320 pages, $29.99

Preachers and teachers particularly, but thoughtful Christians more generally, have long lamented the slide of biblical scholarship into hyper-specialized studies of ancient texts in remote contexts. This first volume of a projected series of more than thirty volumes is therefore to be warmly welcomed. The intention of the series is to reclaim, at long last, the Bible as the book of the Church's living tradition. When Pelikan's magisterial five-volume work, *The Christian Tradition*, first appeared, some critics complained that he had taken an easy out by skipping the first century and the many thorny questions about the relationship between the apostolic generation and subsequent history. This book is, in important respects, the missing first volume of his great work. R.R. Reno, general editor of the Brazos Theological Commentary, writes: "This series of biblical commentaries was born out of the conviction that dogma clarifies rather than obscures. Theological exegesis of the Bible advances upon the assumption that the Nicene tradition, in all its diversity and controversy, provides the proper basis for the interpretation of the Bible as Christian Scripture." In addition to Pelikan, the authors in the series include such notable writers as Robert Louis Wilken and Robert Jenson. Most are not biblical scholars in that guild's narrow definition but theologians, pastors, and historians whose work reflects a profound engagement with the biblical sources. The Pelikan volume on the Book of Acts sets a very high standard for a series that promises to make a historic contribution to understanding the Bible within the living tradition that is the Church. Warmly recommended.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"THE DEFINITIVE DEBUNKING."
— CARDINAL FRANCIS GEORGE, ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO



UNCOVER the HOAX

THE DA VINCI HOAX

Exposing the Errors in *The Da Vinci Code*

Carl E. Olson & Sandra Miesel

Make sure that your family and friends aren't taken in by the Da Vinci hoax. Best-selling author **Dan Brown** says that his book, ***The Da Vinci Code***, has all the answers to Christianity and the truth about Jesus.

But **Carl Olson** and **Sandra Miesel** aren't buying it. In this exposé of sloppy research, misleading evidence, and outright fabrication in Dan Brown's book, you'll learn the REAL truth about Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Leonardo da Vinci and more.

If you, or loved ones, have questions about what's real and what's phony, turn to ***The Da Vinci Hoax.*** The next time someone asks you about *The Da Vinci Code*, make sure you have an answer.

ISBN 1-58617-034-1, 375 pp,
Sewn Softcover, $15.95

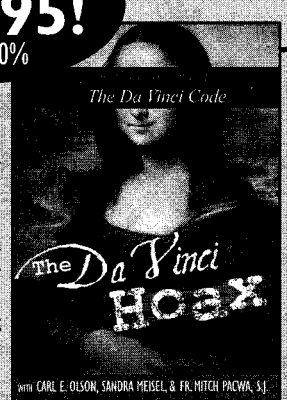
BUY BOTH FOR ONLY
$24.95!
Save 20%

"*The Da Vinci Hoax* is loaded with detail and corroborates many observations I also made."
—**Darrell L. Bock, Ph.D.,**
Author, *Breaking the Da Vinci Code*

"A superb and meticulous job of dissecting the fraud which is *The Da Vinci Code*."
—**James Hitchcock**
Professor of History, St. Louis University

"Unlike the original *Code*, *The Da Vinci Hoax* is a delight to read."
—**Philip Jenkins,**
Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies, Pennsylvania State University

" Mr. Olson and Mrs. Miesel write gracefully, wear their erudition lightly, and have produced a work that is far more readable, intelligent and valuable than the novel it debunks."
—**The Washington Times**



NEW!
THE DA VINCI HOAX DVD
With Carl Olson, Sandra Meisel & Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J.

Now the insights and arguments of the best selling exposé, *The Da Vinci Hoax*, are available on DVD. Apologist **Carl E. Olson,** historian **Sandra Meisel,** and Jesuit biblical scholar **Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J.** join forces to expose the myths of Dan Brown's popular novel, *The Da Vinci Code.*

Using top-notch graphics and outstanding art, this powerful, in-depth documentary gives an inspiring visual and intellectual presentation on the real truth about Christianity, and a devastating critique of the numerous errors and deceptions in *The Da Vinci Code* about Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the early Christians and the Catholic Church.

60 minutes, DVD, $14.95

Want to learn more about *The Da Vinci Hoax?*
Go to www.davincihoax.com

ignatius press

1-800-651-1531 • WWW.IGNATIUS.COM
P.O. BOX 1339, FT COLLINS, CO, 80522

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Public Square

A Continuing Survey of Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

Pope Benedict on Love and Justice

Benedict's first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*—"God Is Love"—is dated the Feast of the Nativity but was not issued until late January. There has been so far surprisingly little commentary on the substance of the argument that the pope advances. Most of the initial response has to do more with the politics or even with what might be described as the public relations of the encyclical. "God is Love" sounds like a warm and fuzzy sentiment aimed, as many news reports said, at accenting the "kinder and gentler" side of a pontiff who has a reputation as a hard-edged enforcer of orthodoxy.

News reports also highlighted the claim that the second part of the document, which addresses the differences between the Church's works of charity and secular politics, is in fact a reworking of notes for an encyclical that Benedict's predecessor, John Paul the Great, had in mind. In truth, both the first and second parts are in striking continuity with Joseph Ratzinger's writings over the decades, bearing the signature themes of his well-known critiques of political theologies that, he is convinced, distort the distinctiveness of the biblical message.

Deus Caritas Est is short, at least by comparison with encyclicals of recent pontificates, with forty-two sections under two headings. The first is "Unity of Love in Creation and in Salvation History," and the second is "The Practice of Love by the Church as a Community of Love." One might say the first is more purely theological, even speculative, while the second is more practical, but that distinction should not be pressed too hard. Throughout the document, theology and practice, theory and application, are in conversation with one another.

The argument—and it is a sustained argument—begins with and repeatedly returns to 1 John 4:16: "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." Benedict notes the many and sometimes contradictory ways in which the word "love" is used, and then asks, "Are all these forms of love basically one, so that love, in its many and varied manifestations, is ultimately a single reality, or are we merely using the same word to designate totally different realities?" He answers that question by coming down strongly on the side of the unity of love.

In the Greek, there are three words for love: *eros, agape,* and *philia*. He notes that the Greek translation of the Old Testament uses *eros* only twice, while the Greek New Testament doesn't use it at all. While *philia*, meaning friendship, occurs in John's Gospel, the biblical texts typically speak of love as *agape*, a word infrequently used in the Greek literature of the time.

While the pope does not mention it explicitly, he knows that he is on well-traveled turf. Many readers will be familiar with C.S. Lewis' discussion of "the four loves." More influential in the world of theology is the work of Anders Nygren, a Swedish theologian, who in the last century posited *agape* against *eros*. Nygren's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

analysis is (too briefly stated) that *eros* is the essentially pagan dynamic of human aspiration toward the ecstatic or divine, while *agape* is the utterly gratuitous love of God preeminently exemplified in the Son of God's gift of himself for our salvation.

Benedict's purpose is to rehabilitate a Christian understanding of *eros*. He says that Friedrich Nietzsche and other moderns held that Christianity, with all its emphasis upon sin, sacrifice, and commandments, had "poisoned" the understanding of *eros*. They asked, "Doesn't [the Church] blow the whistle just when the joy that is the Creator's gift offers us a happiness which is itself a certain foretaste of the divine?" The pagan world, the pope says, saw *eros* as a kind of intoxicated longing, a "divine madness," that found expression in fertility cults and the "sacred" prostitution that flourished in their temples. The Old Testament rejected such cults as incompatible with monotheistic faith, but it did not reject *eros* as such: "An intoxicated and undisciplined *eros* is not an ascent in 'ecstasy' toward the divine but a fall, a degradation of man."

There is, Benedict says, a certain relationship between love and the divine. "Love promises infinity, eternity—a reality far greater and totally other than our everyday experience." But the attainment of the promise is not through succumbing to instinct but through a purification by renunciation that heals *eros* and restores its true grandeur.

Of critical importance is the understanding of the human being as both body and soul. "Should he aspire to be pure spirit and reject the flesh as pertaining to his animal nature alone, then spirit and body would both lose their dignity. On the other hand, should he deny the spirit and consider matter, the body, as the only reality, he would likewise lose his greatness."

The body should be neither denigrated nor exalted. The latter is the cultural tendency today when *eros* is reduced simply to sex and becomes a commodity, with the result that the person becomes a commodity. Thus "the apparent exaltation of the body can quickly turn into a hatred of bodiliness." The Song of Songs in the Old Testament shows the way in which love "becomes concern and care for the other." Love's growth advances as it becomes ever more definitive in the sense of exclusivity (this person alone) and is directed to the eternal (it is "forever"). Such love is ecstasy, not as a moment of intoxication but as a continuing journey, "an ongoing exodus out of the closed inward-looking self" and toward the other, and finally toward God.

In philosophy and theology, a sharp antithesis is proposed between *agape* as the "oblative" love that unconditionally gives and *eros* as the love that seeks to possess. "Were this antithesis to be taken to extremes," the pope writes, "the essence of Christianity would be detached from the vital relations fundamental to human existence and would become a world apart, admirable perhaps, but decisively cut off from the complex fabric of human life." The more that *agape* and *eros* find "a proper unity in the one reality of love, the more the true nature of love is realized." *Deus Caritas Est* aims to reclaim the lived experience of love in all its complexity for a Christian understanding of human possibility. "Biblical faith does not set up a parallel universe or one opposed to that primordial human phenomenon which is love, but rather accepts the whole man." For the Christian, love is more than, but not something other than, what the non-Christian means by love.

The new thing in biblical faith is the image of God and image of man. Israel's *Shema* ("Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord") establishes that all reality has its source in the one God whose creation is dear to Him. At the height of Greek philosophy, the divine power is the object of desire and love and moves the world, but this divine power "in itself lacks nothing and does not love." Here Benedict draws on Old Testament images such as Hosea's depiction of "God's passion for his people using boldly erotic images." The language of the encyclical is itself bold, and could be misread as suggesting that God is not impassible and self-sufficient. But there is in fact a subtle trinitarian turn in which the unity of *eros* and *agape* is effected in the incarnation of the Son of God.

In the Old Testament depiction of the passion of God, "Christians can see a dim prefigurement of the mystery of the cross: So great is God's love for man that by becoming man he follows him even into death, and so reconciles justice and love." This passion is so great that it "turns God against himself, his love against his justice." The Logos, the primordial reason that is the source of all being, is at the same time a passionate lover. "*Eros* is thus supremely ennobled, yet at the same time it is so purified as to become one with *agape*." (In the second part of the encyclical, this distinction between love and justice—God turned against Himself—is key to Benedict's understanding of politics as the realm of justice and the Church as the community of love.)

For a papal encyclical, the document is unusually attentive to the history of philosophy. The pope's interlocutors include Nietzsche, Aristotle, and Plato in rehabilitating our understanding of love. There is a strong element of truth, says Benedict, in the myth, in Plato's *Symposium*, of man having been split in two by Zeus, with the result that he longs for his other half. In the biblical narrative, "man is somehow incomplete, driven by nature to seek in another the part that can

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make him whole, the idea that only in communion with the opposite sex can he become 'complete.'" Thus it is that "corresponding to the image of a monotheistic God is monogamous marriage."

The novelty of the New Testament is in the understanding that, in Jesus Christ, "it is God himself who goes in search of the 'stray sheep,' a suffering and lost humanity." "His death on the cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. . . . By contemplating the pierced side of Christ, we can understand the starting point of this encyclical letter: 'God is love.' It is from there that our definition of love must begin. In this contemplation, the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move."

This is not an individual but a communal path. We are in sacramental communion with the crucified Christ, for it is as St. Paul says: "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10). "Communion," the pope writes, "draws me out of myself toward him and thus also toward unity with all Christians. . . . We can thus understand how *agape* also became a name for the Eucharist: There God's own *agape* comes to us bodily in order to continue his work in us and through us. . . . Here the usual contraposition between worship and ethics simply collapses. 'Worship' itself, eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn."

Benedict then turns to the question of love of God and love of neighbor, asking whether we can love God without seeing him and whether love can be commanded. To the first question, scripture teaches that "closing our eyes to our neighbor also blinds us to God." As to whether love can be commanded, there is in Christ, and for those who are in Christ, a "communion of will" between God and man. "God's will is no longer for me an alien will, something imposed on me from without by the commandments, but it is now my own will, based on the realization that God is in fact more deeply present to me than I am to myself."

And again: "No longer is it a question, then, of a 'commandment' imposed from without and calling for the impossible, but rather of a freely bestowed experience of love from within, a love which by its very nature must then be shared with others." In his speeches and audiences since becoming pope, few themes have been stressed so insistently by Benedict as the truth that the will of God is not an alien will, that God's will is not a heteronymous imposition that constricts the self but an invitation to the fulfillment of the self by living a life of love in response to the gift of love. Thus is *eros* purified and fulfilled.

II

The second section of the encyclical, "The Practice of Love by the Church as a Community of Love," engages the similarities and differences between love and justice—but mainly the differences. Jesus "gave up his Spirit" on the cross, which anticipates the gift of the Spirit to the "ecclesial community" in serving as the Lord served. "The entire activity of the Church is an expression of a love that seeks the integral good of man." This is the calling of every individual Christian and of the ecclesial community. "Love needs to be organized if it is to be an ordered service to the community." Charity is constitutive of being the Church. "Within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life."

The choosing of the deacons in Acts has permanent importance. "With the formation of this group of seven, *diaconia*—the ministry of charity exercised in a communitarian and orderly way—became part of the fundamental structure of the Church. . . . The Church can no more neglect the service of charity than she can neglect the sacraments and the word." Benedict notes that, when Julian the Apostate (d. 363) tried to abolish the Church and reestablish the pagan cults, the one thing he wanted his old-new religion to emulate was the Church's ministry of charity. Thus, it is suggested, has the Church taught the world, including those who think of themselves as the enemies of the Church, the meaning of charity.

The nature of the Church is expressed at the deepest level by her threefold ministry of proclamation (*kerygma*), celebration of the sacraments (*leitourgia*), and works of charity (*diakonia*). "For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others but is part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being." While the Church's love is universal, she is also God's family and has a particular responsibility to members of the family. Here the pope cites Galatians 6:10: "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

Since the nineteenth century, and especially in Marxist doctrine, it has been said that charity must give way to justice; indeed that charity, by taking the edge off the consequences of injustice, is the enemy of justice. "It must be admitted," writes Benedict, "that the Church's leadership was slow to realize that the issue of the just structuring of society needed to be approached in a new way." He then points to the body of modern social doctrine from Leo XIII in the late nineteenth century to "my great predecessor John Paul II." This social doctrine provided the alternative to the Marxist

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

notion that revolution and the collectivizing of the means of the production would establish a just society in which charity is superfluous. Of the Marxist claim, he says, "This illusion has vanished."

Justice is the proper business of the state. "Fundamental to Christianity is the distinction between what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God." The Church, as affirmed by the Second Vatican Council, supports "the autonomy of the temporal sphere." Between the Church and the state, "the two spheres are distinct yet always interrelated." Then this reflection on the meaning of politics:

> Justice is both the aim and the intrinsic criterion of all politics. Politics is more than a mere mechanism for defining the rules of public life. Its origin and its goal are found in justice, which by its very nature has to do with ethics. The state must inevitably face the question of how justice can be achieved here and now. But this presupposes an even more radical question: What is justice? The problem is one of practical reason; but if reason is to be exercised properly it must undergo constant purification, since it can never be completely free of the danger of a certain ethical blindness caused by the dazzling effect of power and special interests.

At this point "politics and faith meet." Politics is the realm of reason, and faith can help liberate reason from its blind spots and enable it to be more fully itself. "This is where Catholic social doctrine has its place: It has no intention of giving the Church power over the state. Even less is it an attempt to impose on those who do not share the faith ways of thinking and modes of conduct proper to faith. Its aim is simply to help purify reason and to contribute, here and now, to the acknowledgment and attainment of what is just." The Church teaches "on the basis of reason and natural law . . . but it is not the Church's responsibility to make this teaching prevail in political life." The last point is reiterated in several ways. "As a political task," building a just social and civil order "cannot be the Church's immediate responsibility." "The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible." "A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church."

Readily recognizable here are the themes of John Paul II and Ratzinger pressed in response to political theologies—particularly the liberation theology so prominent a few decades ago. "Love—*caritas*—will always prove necessary even in the most just society," Benedict writes. "There is no ordering of the state so just that it will eliminate the need for the service of love." "The state which would provide everything, absorbing everything into itself, would ultimately become a mere bureaucracy incapable of guaranteeing the very thing that the suffering person—every person—needs: namely, loving personal concern." The claim that just social structures would make charity superfluous "masks a materialist conception of man: the mistaken notion that man can live 'by bread alone'—a notion that demeans man and ultimately disregards all that is specifically human."

"Ecclesial charity" is an *opus proprium*, a work integral to the very nature of the Church. In the work of charity, the Church may cooperate with the state and others, but her work must never lose its Christian distinctiveness grounded in the love of God in Christ. "She does not cooperate collaterally but acts as a subject with direct responsibility, doing what corresponds to her nature." Implicit in this understanding is that the Church is never simply an agent of society; she *is* a distinct society, doing what, by the grace of God, she does naturally.

In the Church's work of charity, professional competence and effectiveness in meeting needs is not enough. "Charity workers need a 'formation of the heart': They need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others." Further, "Christian charitable activity must be independent of parties and ideologies." Especially must it be free from ideologies that deride charity as a stop-gap measure or even as the servant of an unjust status quo. Benedict's language is strong: "What we have [in such ideologies] is really an inhuman philosophy. People of the present are sacrificed to the *moloch* of the future. . . . One does not make the world more human by refusing to act humanely here and now."

Must the Church's work of charity be directly related to evangelization, to what is today commonly called proselytizing? Benedict answers: "Those who practice charity in the Church's name will never seek to impose the Church's faith on others. . . . A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God and when it is better to say nothing and to let love alone speak." Here he does not, but he might have, cited the maxim of St. Francis of Assisi that we should preach the gospel always, using words when necessary. Always, Benedict insists, Christian charity is rooted in and bears witness to the love of God in Christ.

The commitment to charity, if it is to be sustained and open-ended, must be free from delusions. "[We] are only instruments in the Lord's hands; and this knowledge frees us from the presumption of thinking that we alone are responsible for building a better

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

world. In all humility we will do what we can, and in all humility we will entrust the rest to the Lord." If we would help others, we ourselves must be changed. "It is time to reaffirm the importance of prayer in the face of the activism and the growing secularism of many Christians engaged in charitable work."

Confronted by perduring injustice, our prayer takes the form of crying out with Job, and is ultimately joined to the prayer of Jesus on the Cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Such prayer, says Benedict, is not an expression of despair but "is the deepest and most radical way of affirming our faith in God's sovereign power." As for the ideologists who claim to know the way to a perfectly just society and who "build a case against God in defense of man, on whom can they depend when human activity proves powerless?"

Caritas is the way, the only way, of the Church. Benedict points to the history of monasticism and the saints—Anthony, Francis, Ignatius, Vincent de Paul, Teresa of Calcutta—who are "the true bearers of light within history, for they are men and women of faith, hope, and love." And, above all, he points to Mary, for whom "the Word of God becomes her word, and her word issues from the Word of God." That Word and that word is always and forever the word of *caritas* discovered in the truth that "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him."

III

Deus Caritas Est is not only a brief encyclical, as encyclicals go. It is also unusual in that there are few footnotes, thirty-six to be precise, and only two refer to earlier papal teaching. More substantively, one is struck by the determination to reclaim for Christian thought and life the human experience of *eros*, purified and fulfilled by *agape*. This should be grist for the mills of contemporary theologians.

I do not know what to make of the fact that the discussion of the fulfillment of the human person through being joined with a person of the opposite sex in marriage is not followed by a discussion of celibacy. In recent years, and notably in the teaching of John Paul the Great, there has been much attention paid to the nuptial character of priestly celibacy. The absence of that theme in a discussion where it might have been expected is not without interest. Perhaps the explanation is simply that not everything can be treated in one encyclical.

Particularly striking is what some may see as Benedict's realistic, antiutopian, and even dour view of the possibilities of justice in a fallen world. Benedict is very much in the Augustinian tradition, and St. Augustine is repeatedly cited in *Deus Caritas Est*. He is also known to be a sympathetic student of the theology of the Augustinian-formed Martin Luther, and I expect some theologians will see elements of Luther's concept of the "twofold kingdom of God" in this encyclical.

In the treatment of the relation between justice and love, in which "God turns against himself," there is something of the "paradoxical" way in which God exercises his sovereignty. Justice is the "alien" or "left-hand" rule of God through temporal powers, while love is the "proper" or "right-hand" rule of God through the Church and the gospel she proclaims and lives. The parallels with Luther's conceptualization are intriguing. At the same time, however, Luther was not entirely original, and a similar conceptualization could no doubt be developed from the teaching of Thomas Aquinas. But that is a subject for another time.

Arresting, too, is Benedict's understanding of the collapse of the contraposition between worship and ethics. The emphasis on the ecclesial community, the Church, as a distinct society or, as he repeatedly says, as a "family" suggests that *leitourgia*, and especially the Eucharist, is, in fact, the enactment within history of the new politics for which the human heart yearns. We are rightly outraged by injustice and hungry for justice. In an anticipatory way, recognized by faith, the crucified and risen Christ satisfies that hunger in the celebration of *agape* that is the Eucharist. The Eucharist is in this way the anticipated new politics of the Kingdom in which justice and love will be again and forever one.

Here I am, admittedly, going beyond what the encyclical explicitly says—but not beyond what it suggests. One thing is manifestly clear: Far from being an anodyne document aimed at putting a friendly face on this pontificate, the encyclical is a radical call for the Church to be the Church in a world in which unsentimental candor continues to compel the cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The answer to that cry is that, despite all and in all and through all, *Deus caritas est*.

FT

Bonhoeffer Today

Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, born in 1906 and martyred by the Nazis on April 9, 1945, well understood the demonic nature of political utopianism. When "eternities are demanded of life," the powers of the earth readily pay the price of death in order to force life to deliver on the demand. Pastor Bonhoeffer wrote in his *Ethics*:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The miracle of Christ's resurrection makes nonsense of that idolization of death which is prevalent among us today. Where death is the last thing, fear of death is combined with defiance. Where death is the last thing, earthly life is all or nothing. Boastful reliance on earthly eternities goes side by side with a frivolous playing with life. A convulsive acceptance and seizing hold of life stands cheek by jowl with indifference and contempt for life. There is no clearer indication of the idolization of death than when a period claims to be building for eternity and yet life has no value in this period, or when big words are spoken of a new man, of a new world and of a new society which is to be ushered in, and yet all that is new is the destruction of life as we have it. The drastic acceptance or rejection of earthly life reveals that only death has any value here. To clutch at everything or to cast away everything is the reaction of one who believes fanatically in death.

But wherever it is recognized that the power of death is illumined by the miracle of the resurrection and of the new life, there no eternities are demanded of life but one takes of life what it offers, not all or nothing, but good and evil, the important and the unimportant, joy and sorrow; one neither clings convulsively to life nor casts it frivolously away. One is content with the allotted span and one does not invest earthly things with the title of eternity; one allows to death the limited rights which it still possesses. It is from beyond death that one expects the coming of the new man and of the new world, from the power by which death has been vanquished.

While We're At It

■ "Evangelicalism, now much absorbed by the arts and tricks of marketing, is simply not very serious anymore." That is the judgment of David F. Wells of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in a new book, *Above All Earthly Pow'rs* (Eerdmans). Forget about the poetic spelling of "powers" in the title; this is a book of considerable interest. More than half of it is devoted to an overview of the last several decades of sociological writing about religion and modernity, with major attention to the work of Peter L. Berger, and laced with a theological critique indebted chiefly to Karl Barth. The last third of the book is a devastating polemic against the evangelical "megachurch" phenomenon, with its pandering to "seekers" in search of a vaguely spiritual uplift devoid of concern for truth or serious discipleship. The panderers, writes Wells, claim to be winning souls for Christ, but in fact the number of "born again" Christians is static. They are really engaged in niche marketing by selling spiritual entertainment that, by comparison, makes Bonhoeffer's "cheap grace" look like the way of the Cross. Wells writes: "This is probably the first time that Christian people anywhere in the West have thought that ecclesiastical architecture is, in principle, offensive, that religious symbols, such as crosses, should be banned from churches, that pulpits should be abandoned, that hymns should be abolished, that pews should be sent to the garbage dump, and that pianos and organs should be removed. All of this has been happening on the forefront of this movement. This is probably the first time, too, that churchgoers have wanted their buildings to be mistaken for corporate headquarters or country clubs."

■ There are exquisite ironies here. In *The Kingdom of God in America* (1937), H. Richard Niebuhr famously summarized the gospel of Protestant liberalism: "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." That is, *mutatis mutandis*, pretty much how David Wells describes the gospel on offer at the evangelical supermarkets. From my limited knowledge of that world, much of his indictment has the ring of truth. Certainly, a movement that sells entertainment and the experience of spiritual "highs" to the neglect of the doctrinal, devotional, intellectual, and artistic traditions of historic Christianity will strike others, Christians and non-Christians alike, as "not very serious." At the same time, it must be said that the evangelicalism criticized by David Wells is hardly the whole of all the worlds of evangelicalism in this country.

■ The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was founded in 1915 by Arthur O. Lovejoy, a professor at Johns Hopkins, and John Dewey in order to defend academic freedom. It has over the years had rocky relations with religiously inspired colleges and universities, especially those that require subscribing to a statement of faith. Writing in *Academe*, Lee Hardy, who teaches philosophy at Calvin College, says: "The AAUP was founded during the heyday of American progressivism, a broad cultural movement that invested its hopes for the future of humanity in the free and untrammeled development of the natural and social sciences. It also posited a conflict in principle between science and religion. In fact, it looked forward to the eventual triumph of science over religion; science was to replace religion as the basis of human public life and culture." Hardy claims it is a considerable benefit to be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at Calvin "where I could draw on the full range of my convictions in my teaching and research, a freedom I was not likely to enjoy in an officially secular environment." He writes: "Much of the literature on academic freedom at religious colleges and universities seems to miss this point entirely. A religiously affiliated institution of higher learning is, after all, an elective association within civil society. It is not a political society into which people are born willy-nilly, nor is it the only game in town. Faculty members are not compelled to teach at a church-related college or university against their will. Treating the academy as if it were the state and not a free association of the likeminded, the AAUP's 1915 *Declaration of Principles* refers to 'institutions which *impose* upon their faculties doctrinal standards of a sectarian or partisan character.' (Emphasis added.) Similarly, in the 1993 book *Freedom and Tenure in the Academy*, philosopher Judith Jarvis Thomson and legal scholar Matthew Finkin speak of doctrinal requirements as a form of coercion, where academic institutions 'police' their faculties, employing the techniques of terror. I find this language wholly foreign to my experience as a faculty member at Calvin College—and about as appropriate as charging the Sierra Club with using terrorist tactics for expecting its employees to be committed to a strong environmental agenda. I endorse the idea of a liberal state that is neutral on issues of God and the good in order to accommodate deep cultural diversity, but the free associations of civil society should not be required to adopt a position of neutrality on these issues as well. In fact, requiring such neutrality would be an excellent way to eliminate the cultural diversity that liberal society is designed to protect." That is not all that is to be said about the contribution of determinedly Christian colleges, but it is something that needs saying again and again.

■ Patty Crowley has died at age ninety-two. She and her husband Pat were once very major figures in American Catholicism. The Christian Family Movement, which they led, was a powerful force of renewal for Catholic family life and lay leadership in the Church. Then came 1968, the concerted attack on the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, and the shattering of, among many other things, the Christian Family Movement. Peter Steinfels reflects in the *New York Times* on the death of Patty Crowley: "She was, in other words, representative of a large segment of American Catholics who have come to enjoy material security, good educations, and confidence in their own initiatives. If, like her, they reached maturity before the crisis over Church authority that began with the birth control controversy, they often have a kind of bred-in-the-bones Catholicism. . . . Patty Crowley and her peers never doubted that the Church had something to say, but after 1968 they began to wonder whether it was interested in listening." That puts the matter very nicely, I think. The Chicago funeral of Patty Crowley was, writes Steinfels, "a kind of last hurrah" for a certain kind of Catholic. A half-century ago, they were often called "*Commonweal* Catholics," referring to a magazine of which Peter Steinfels was once the editor, being succeeded by his wife Peggy Steinfels. They were "American Catholics" rather than "Catholic Americans," a distinction that I develop in *Catholic Matters: Confusion, Controversy, and the Splendor of Truth*, published in March by Basic Books. They thought they were pioneering an American way of being Catholic, rather than being called to model a Catholic way of being American. They were bred-in-the-bone Catholics who felt betrayed by a Church that did not accommodate itself to their having "arrived" in America. But of course, the Church is universal, not just American, and is obliged by truths that are eternal and not limited to the Camelot moment of *Commonweal* Catholics. With the dramatic expansion of the Church on other continents, it became evident that American Catholicism, while not exactly a sideshow, is certainly not front stage center. This is a bitter pill for nostalgists who gathered for the last hurrah in Chicago. Steinfels' recent book, *A People Adrift: The Crisis of the Roman Catholic Church in America*, looks back longingly to what he views as the inspiring leadership of such figures as Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago and Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, and laments the era of John Paul II and Ratzinger, now become Benedict XVI. What he laments as the derailing of the American Catholic "coming of age" a younger generation of Catholics is discovering as the high adventure of fidelity. Peter Steinfels is right. We are witnessing the long last hurrah of an older generation who believed that liberation from Catholic teaching, epitomized by the insurrection of 1968, was the future. There will be many more funerals at which mourners of like mind will reminisce about the revolution that was not to be. Meanwhile, a new era of vibrant orthodoxy is, please God, aborning.

■ Marian Salzman is connected with an advertising agency called JWT Worldwide and got considerable attention by inventing the term metrosexual. In her new book, *The Future of Men*, she's going for her full fifteen minutes by announcing that this year's man is the ubersexual. Ubersexuals are "men who embrace the positive aspects of their masculinity, such as confidence, leadership, passion, and compassion." But they do so "without giving in to negative neanderthal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stereotypes." "The ubersexual has a passion for principles. The metrosexual has a passion for fashion," and so forth. The ubersexual does not "turn up his nose at any cultural pursuit that doesn't involve sports, beer, or burgers." Who knows, he might even subscribe to FIRST THINGS. Before signing up for this season's personality remake, however, you might check out whether the woman in your life is comfortable with the *über* implied in being an ubersexual.

■ A media flutter followed the report that Benedict XVI had said that "Islam is incapable of reform." What happened is that Father Joseph Fessio, in a radio interview with Hugh Hewitt, had discussed a meeting with the pope in which the pope reflected on the way that Christians and Muslims differ in their understanding of their sacred scriptures. Neither the pope nor Fr. Fessio, says Fr. Fessio, claimed that Islam is incapable of reform. The important difference, he explains, is that the Qur'an is understood as the words of God delivered directly to Muhammad while Christians understand the Bible to be "both the Word of God and the words of men inspired by God, within a community that contains divinely appointed authorized interpreters." Fr. Fessio writes, "My later remarks in a live radio interview were extemporaneous. I think that I paraphrased the Holy Father with general accuracy, but my mentioning what he said at all was an indiscretion, and my impromptu paraphrase should not be used for a careful exegesis of the mind of the Holy Father." So that clears up that. What Benedict has said on the record, it should be noted, gives reason to believe that he has a very sobering view of the deep differences between Islam and Christianity.

■ So now I'll never get a chance to see it. NBC pulled its weekly drama, *The Book of Daniel.* A friend describes it this way: "Played by Aidan Quinn, the title character was an Episcopal priest with a tumultuous family and church life. Daniel was addicted to painkillers and had an alcoholic wife, an adulterous bishop and father, a homosexual son, a drug-dealing daughter, a promiscuous teenage son, a brother-in-law embezzling from the church, and a lesbian sister-in-law engaging in group sex. Periodically in the program, Jesus appears to the priest to dispense non-judgmental comments." Situated in a posh Connecticut suburb, *The Book of Daniel* depicted wealthy Episcopalians who fought and cavorted at the church, the country club, and the priest's handsome colonial mansion. The bishop warns the priest that his liberal ways may provoke the supposedly strict archbishop of Canterbury. "I might have to report you to Rowan Williams," one imagines the bishop saying. The daring priest is not intimidated. Understandably. As it happens, the Episcopal bishop of Connecticut is a very liberal fellow who is making life difficult for dissenting conservative priests and parishes. It is understandable that few Americans could identify with the liberal country club hijinks of wealthy Episcopalians in Connecticut. But one has to wonder what the folks at NBC had in mind in the first place. As a depiction of liberal religion, the lesson would seem to be that, after the rebellious children have taken over the house and then burned it to the ground, they still need to pretend that there is a parent who is going to call them to account. Otherwise, what is the point of rebelling? "I'm going to tell the archbishop of Canterbury on you." Standing tall with chin high, they boldly respond, "Go ahead, see if we care. We dare you!" Followed by an eerie silence as the realization dawns that there is no parent, there are no rules, nobody is watching, nobody cares, the show has been cancelled.

■ On January 17, the U.S. Supreme Court let stand Oregon's law permitting doctor-assisted suicide. The issues were, as is often the case, tangled, with the relation between federal and state jurisdiction very much in play. A deeply troubling aspect is that the court majority accepted assisted suicide as a form of medical care, while those in the minority vigorously protested that caring can never mean killing. Bishop Robert Vasa of Baker, Oregon, wrote a moving reflection on the Court's decision, which included this: "For the victims of Oregon's assisted-suicide law the world has become a place that they feel is not worth living in. In the past, we would have seen this as a desperate cry for help, a sign of depression, a sign that the person needs help not to die but to live better. The Oregon Solution, however, removes any glimmer of hope and assures the person that their feelings of hopelessness, perhaps uselessness, feelings of being a burden are all exactly right. So when the depressed person says, 'I don't feel like I have any reason to continue living,' Oregon says, 'You know, you're right! There really is no reason for you to continue living.' What a horrible thing to do to depressed, distressed, suffering, and even terminally ill persons. The human spirit seeks meaning, grasps at hope, and Oregon takes these away. Clearly, sick and suffering people feel that their lives are meaningless. We can either affirm or deny meaning for them. One leads to life the other to suicide. Life is meaningful and valuable. Suicide affirms hopelessness. In the past when someone complained of the intolerable burdens of life, someone might propose calling the doctor. Now if someone complains of the intolerable burdens of life, someone might propose that if they truly feel that way then maybe they should call the 'Doctor.' Instead of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

affirming the person's worth and value as a person, as a family member, and as a member of the human family, the feelings of despair are ratified as valid and acceptable. Then there is no genuine attempt to treat and terminate 'the patient's attitude toward his unchangeable fate' but rather a termination of the patient. I often tell people in distress, 'Trust what you know, not what you feel.' The terminally ill patients need assurances of what they know from experience. They need to know that their lives are valuable and worth living. They need to know that they are loved and esteemed and even needed. Every suicide, and especially an assisted suicide, represents a failure of the human community to affirm the meaning of a person's life. Ask not for whom the bells toll."

■ Given time enough, some disputes do get clarified. It will be remembered that, early in the pontificate of Benedict XVI, Father Thomas Reese resigned as editor of the Jesuit weekly *America*. The *New York Times* depicted it as a sign of the reign of terror to come and the editors of *Commonweal* went ballistic in their protest against the ham-fisted oppression of Rome. I suggested that everybody should calm down; that there were serious problems with the way Fr. Reese was running the magazine; that we should not dismiss his claim that he had voluntarily resigned; and that, in any event, if he was fired, it was the Society of Jesus that did the firing. John Allen recently asked Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, the superior general of the Jesuits, what really happened. Kolvenbach said: "*America* magazine, under the competent and dynamic guidance of Fr. Tom Reese, believed that the best service to a mature Catholic public was to let the two sides of a controversial question defend their views. However, this orientation did not meet the approval of some pastorally concerned priests who were worried about a negative effect on the faith-growth of the Catholics. They expect that Jesuit publications will offer clear standings to meet the questions of the day, avoiding confusion and relativism. Unhappily, instead of changing his policy, Fr. Reese resigned. This episode takes us back to St. Ignatius when he speaks about *sentire cum ecclesia* [thinking with the Church]." Fr. Kolvenbach has generous words for Fr. Reese personally. He notes—and, it would seem, agrees with—the expectation that Jesuit publications should clearly support Catholic teaching, and he regrets that Fr. Reese chose to resign rather than change his way of editing *America*. Allen asks whether concerns about *America* came from the United States rather than the Vatican. Kolvenbach: "Yes, from clergy outside the Jesuits in the United States, including some in senior positions." If one credits the account of Fr. Kolvenbach, and I do, that should put an end to claims that Benedict forced the removal of Fr. Reese. On the other hand, I would not have been upset if he had done so, although I was rather certain he had not. Finally, one notes with regret that there has been little discernible change in the editorial direction of *America*. The magazine's recent and apparently unequivocal editorial rejection of Rome's instruction on homosexuality and the priesthood is a troubling case in point.

■ "Once you have made the world an end and faith a means, you have almost won your man, and it makes very little difference what kind of worldly end he is pursuing," C.S. Lewis' Screwtape tells his nephew Wormwood. "Provided that meetings, pamphlets, policies, movements, causes, and crusades matter more to him than prayers and sacraments and charity, he is ours." That piece of wisdom is quoted by Jason Byassee, assistant editor of the mainline/oldline magazine *Christian Century*, cautioning evangelicals against the intoxication of political influence. "It's tempting to trade fidelity for influence," writes Byassee, "but it's hard to get fidelity back, and influence doesn't satisfy. These dire warnings aside, enjoy your time at the top. 'The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever,' Scripture says. Political power is a good deal more transient than the things we both hold most dear. When the powers that be are done with you, we mainline liberals will have a rocking chair for you at the retirement home of the formerly religiously important. Maybe then we can finally see each other as sisters and brothers."

■ The foregoing counsel is always timely. "Put not your trust in princes," as the Psalmist says. Christian history is strewn with examples of those who have sold their spiritual birthright for a pot of political message. While not detracting from Mr. Byassee's cautions, however, it should be noted that evangelicals will get to the retirement home by a very different trajectory. The old Protestant establishment (Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Congregationalist—the core constituents of the National Council of Churches) were the natural heirs of America's founding class. Religious and cultural hegemony was theirs by right. Beginning in the 1960s, they squandered it in a spasm of guilt over real and alleged injustices of American society, and of hubris that they, being the vital center, represented a better America determined to join the right side—meaning the left side—of the global revolution. More important, they squandered it theologically, mortgaging the gospel of the Kingdom to invest recklessly in the secular city. The public insurgency of the evangelicals that began in the late 1970s was very different.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They understood themselves to be engaged in an aggressive defense against the ruling class, including the religious ruling class, that had once driven them into the wilderness and now threatened to destroy what was left of the world they held dear. As Philip Jenkins underscores in his most recent book, *Decade of Nightmares*, it is hard to remember now just how arrogantly aggressive and confident liberalism was in the mid-1970s. Thirty years later, some evangelicals are intoxicated with their newfound public influence. They pinch themselves as they walk through the corridors of power. They tell themselves they have arrived, not really believing it. Just as well. Perhaps not as rapidly as their ascent, but disappointment, corruption, and decline will surely come. They will never become the Protestant establishment in the way that the National Council was once the Protestant establishment. There are many reasons for that, and not least because they came to influence by contending against the dreams of progressive secularism that the old establishment so faithfully, and fatefully, served. But it is surely to be hoped that in time, and not waiting until the retirement home, Christians will discover one another as brothers and sisters in allegiance to the One whose kingdom is not of this world.

■ The Austrian bishops came visiting and Pope Benedict spoke to them like a Bavarian uncle: "There are some topics relating to the truth of the faith, and above all to moral doctrine, which are not present in the catechesis and preaching of your dioceses to a sufficient extent, and which sometimes are either not confronted at all or are not addressed in the clear sense understood by the Church. Perhaps those who are responsible for the proclamation [of the truth] are afraid that people may draw back if they speak too clearly. However, experience in general demonstrates that it is precisely the opposite that happens. Don't deceive yourselves! Catholic teaching offered in an incomplete manner is a contradiction of itself and cannot be fruitful in the long term." What about that don't you understand?

■ James Tramel, a convicted murderer, was paroled by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger after he had demonstrated that he is a new man. He was then ordained a priest by Bishop William Swing, the Episcopal *episcopos* of San Francisco. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reports that Swing "used a blueberry muffin and grape soda out of the prison vending machine as stand-ins for bread and wine during the ceremony." Some ask, Why? Others ask, Why not?

■ *The Da Vinci Code*, the movie, is scheduled to open on May 19 and we've noted here projects by which some evangelical groups are, in curious ways, cooperating with the producers in getting Christians to go see it. The idea is that this is a "teachable moment" and a great opportunity to counter flagrant lies with the truth. Well, maybe, but I've never noticed that there is such a shortage of flagrant lies that we have to go about promoting them in order to have something to counter. In any event, the concern is expressed that, while our evangelical friends might counter the manifestly anti-biblical aspects of the book and movie, they are not likely to be as alert as they should be to the anti-Catholicism with which the story is riddled. In part because some of them might share Dan Brown's twisted view of Catholicism. So, I am asked, where are the Catholics who are intelligently and energetically countering the fiction that is the *Da Vinci Code*. The answer is that they're all over the Internet. For starters, you might want to check out Catholic Exchange at *www.davinciantidote.com*. There you will come across *The Da Vinci Hoax* by Carl E. Olson and Sandra Miesel, published by Ignatius Press. And a neat little 130-page book called *The Da Vinci Deception: 100 Questions About the Facts and Fictions of the Da Vinci Code*, published by Ascension Press, which also supplies posters and other promotional materials for forming parish discussion groups about the book and the film. It is true that we have made only passing reference to the *Da Vinci* phenomenon in these pages. The magazine cannot do everything, and our attention to pop culture is limited. That doesn't mean pop culture is unimportant; it's called pop because it is popular and influences, for better and worse, people beyond numbering. Our shtick is interesting ideas and Mr. Brown does not have any interesting ideas to engage. He is a teller of tall tales, and what he does he does very well, at least as measured by sales. I don't think one needs to help the producers by encouraging people to go see the movie. It is expected that millions will do that without the help of church leaders, whether evangelical or Catholic. It can be turned into a genuine teachable moment, however, and imaginative planners of parish programs should employ the abundant materials available to take advantage of the widespread interest.

■ For some people, it takes an awful lot to trigger righteous anger. Especially when they recognize that they're not being attacked without reason. Greg Erlandson, publisher of *Our Sunday Visitor*, begins his article with an acknowledgment of the horror of clerical sex abuse. "Any priest who is found guilty of such abuse in an objective investigation or in an appropriate court should be dealt with according to the laws of the state and the Church." Then he changes pace: "But we are so far past this point." Then comes the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

anger, which is not to be confused with hate but is just outrage at gross injustice. "Catholics are being robbed by a collection of activists, judges, legislators, and lawyers in a shrewdly manipulated hysteria that shows no sign of abating. It has resulted in an estimated one billion dollars in payments. Now parish properties and services are at risk. . . . No other institution has undergone this kind of scrutiny—or taken similar steps to remedy the problems. It is estimated that the number of abuse cases in one year in the nation's public schools is larger than the total number of alleged cases in the Church in the past 50 years." More specifically, in 1998 the U.S. Department of Justice listed 103,600 reported cases of sexual abuse in public schools, while in the 53 years from 1950 to 2003 there were 10,667 reported cases of clergy sexual abuse nationwide. That's ten times as many in a single year as instances of clerical abuse in more than half a century. Yet the media and the legal system, which profess to be concerned about protecting children, have had little to say about abuse in public schools or other institutions. An honorable exception is the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* which ran a series on "Dirty Secrets," examining sex abuse in public schools regionally and nationally. That was back in 1999. Public schools are protected by government immunities from large claims for damages, and abusing teachers are routinely moved from classroom to classroom. "The Catholic Church is being singled out," Erlandson writes. "You are being singled out. It is your pocket that is being picked clean. It is Catholic schools, Catholic aid programs, Catholic charities, Catholic parishes that are being bled dry. I believe it is time that Catholics fight back. Turn the spotlight on the legal profiteers of sexual-abuse allegations. . . . Oppose legislative efforts to further punish the Church by rolling back the statutes of limitations." On the latter score, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver, supported by Protestant and Orthodox leaders, is leading the fight in Colorado. Erlandson concludes: "Bishops have made mistakes. So have the lawyers and doctors who counseled them. Some of these mistakes were compounded by clericalism, arrogance, and insensitivity. But this controversy is no longer about these men. This is about us. We can continue to allow the Church to be singled out for extraordinary punishment, or we can finally say, 'Enough!'" The Erlandson article is, I believe, more than a straw in the wind. During the Long Lent that began in Boston in 2002, bishops and priests have been in a defensive posture, and understandably so. Lay people such as Erlandson are, while in no way fudging their disappointment with their leaders, saying that it is past time for Catholics to come to the defense of their Church. The patrimony built by generations of devotion is being looted by trial lawyers and politicians. Righteous anger is in order.

■ Despite its being discredited by scholars again and again, *Inherit the Wind*, a dramatization of the 1925 Scopes trial, is still a favorite with high school and college drama groups. I saw somewhere—I forget where—that Norman Lear, the television producer, is funding a new dramatization of the trial with Ed Asner playing William Jennings Bryan. In any event, in the received account Bryan is the Bible-thumping dolt who is totally destroyed by the rapier-like tongue of Clarence Darrow.

■ One thing leading to another, I thought you might be interested in this account of a debate on the future of religion between Clarence Darrow and G.K. Chesterton at the Mecca Temple in New York City. The account is by the noted journalist Henry Hazlitt and appeared in the February 4, 1931, issue of the *Nation*.

> In the ballot that followed, the audience voted more than two to one for the defender of the faith, Mr. Chesterton of course, and if the vote was on the relative merits of the two debaters, and not on the question itself, it was surely a very just one. Mr. Chesterton's argument was like Mr. Chesterton, amiable, courteous, jolly; it was always clever, it was full of nice turns of expression, and altogether a very adroit exhibition by one of the world's ablest intellectual fencing masters and one of its most charming gentlemen. Mr. Darrow's personality, by contrast, seemed rather colorless and certainly very dour. His attitude seemed almost surly: he slurred his words; the rise and fall of voice was sometimes heavily melodramatic, and his argument was conducted on an amazingly low intellectual level.
>
> Ostensibly the defender of science against Mr. Chesterton, he obviously knew much less about science than Mr. Chesterton did; when he essayed to answer his opponent on the views of Eddington and Jeans, it was patent that he did not have the remotest conception of what the new physics was all about. His victory over Mr. Byran at Dayton had been too cheap and easy; he remembered it not wisely but too well. His arguments are still the arguments of the village atheist of the Ingersoll period; at Mecca Temple he still seemed to be trying to shock and convince yokels.
>
> Mr. Chesterton's deportment was irreproachable, but I am sure that he was secretly unhappy. He had been on the platform many times against George Bernard Shaw. This opponent could not extend his powers. He was not getting his exercise.

To other forms of exercise, one notes in passing, GKC was decidedly averse.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

■ The fanatically secularist-socialist government of Spain has decided that birth certificates will no longer specify a "mother" and "father," since those terms presuppose distinctions which can no longer be assumed. Father will be replaced by "Progenitor A" and mother will become "Progenitor B." Note the lingering patriarchy in the man getting the first letter of the alphabet. And I'm not sure how this change resolves the uncertainty about distinctions that can no longer be assumed. I take it that the sex-distinctive names of the parties involved will still be allowed, so that it should not be too difficult to tell the mother from the father, or at least the female from the male. But the engineers of the brave new world are undoubtedly working on that, too. While I'm on the subject of curious uses of the alphabet, I've never seen anybody remark on this American habit of calling the children of the baby boomers Generation X, while those who are now under age twenty-five or so are called Generation Y. There is only one letter left. The assumption is that the next generation will be the last? Just asking.

■ A sloppy censor at the *New York Times* is possibly out looking for a job. Here is a story by Carl Zimmer about medical research on pregnancy. It is noted that the heart and the kidney work fine for years and years, but pregnancy is associated with all sorts of medical problems. Then this: "The difference is that the heart and kidney belong to a single individual, while pregnancy is a two-person operation. And this operation does not run in perfect harmony. . . . A mother and her unborn child engage in an unconscious struggle over the nutrients she will provide it." Two *persons*? *Unborn child*? So far the slips have not been noted in the "Corrections" section of the paper.

■ The *New York Times* editorialists broke out in a paean of praise for Roger Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles. His bold initiative, we were told, contributed to raising the level of moral discourse in public policy. You can be sure the subject was not abortion or same-sex marriage. No, the cardinal had used the occasion of an Ash Wednesday statement to declare that he would instruct his priests and other church workers not to cooperate with any federal regulation requiring citizens to snitch on illegal immigrants. The term "civil disobedience" was used, which gave the statement a frisson of liberal causes past. Leaving occasion and rhetoric aside, of course the cardinal is right. The Church ministers to people in need, and its ministers are not agents of the state. In large parts of the Southwest, but not only in the Southwest, the majority of those with whom priests work are in the country under circumstances that are at least legally doubtful. The low estimate is that there are eleven million illegal immigrants working in the United States. Any law that would require clergy to serve as federal immigration officers would be unjust and monumentally dumb, and I expect the Congress knows that. On the larger question of what is to be done about immigration, I recently examined the various ways of thinking about this proposed by Noah Pickus in his book, *True Faith and Allegiance* (Public Square, March). As I write, the House passed a bill focusing mainly on border control, which is generally viewed as the favored conservative concern. Now the Senate is entertaining—although certainly not entertained by—a passel of proposals, ranging from what is tantamount to sending them all back to what is blanket amnesty in all but name. Neither of those options, we may be reasonably sure, will reach the president's desk. There are good arguments, including good moral arguments, all around. Those who come to work hard and are eager to be part of the American mainstream should be welcomed; the best of intentions and behavior does not justify flouting the law; any self-respecting nation must be able to control its borders; an underclass of millions with no legal existence poses a serious security problem; the economy depends on those who do the work Americans will not do; and on and on. Immigration policy at this point in history, it seems to me, is a classic case in which not only will the insistence on the best defeat the better, but in which it is very difficult to get agreement on what might be better. Everyone can agree, of course, that one answer is for such countries as Mexico to become so prosperous that their citizens will not so desperately want to work in the United States. At this point, however, that is no more than a pleasant sentiment. Some day, perhaps.

■ Margaret O'Brien Steinfels reviews Jimmy Carter's best-selling *Our Endangered Values* in *Commonweal*. We are reminded, she says, that "Carter was a decent, plain-spoken politician sandwiched between the hypocrisy of Richard Nixon and the spin of Ronald Reagan." Steinfels appreciates Carter's "centrist" position on issues such as church and state, homosexuality, and abortion. The review ends by saying the book is a "sobering reminder that a temperate and honest occupant in the Oval Office can go a long way in serving the American political system while holding serious and distinctive religious beliefs." She does not come right out and say so, but my hunch is that she doesn't mean George W. Bush.

■ "We now need to extend our love and attachment to the Church to an uncomfortably prophetic level!" So writes Father Alain Ambeault on behalf of the Canadi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an Religious Conference in a "Message to the Bishops." The Canadian Religious Conference includes more than two hundred religious orders, male and female, present in Canada. The prophetic message calls for "advancement and progress" in the Church's teaching on, *inter alia*, contraception, divorce, euthanasia, female priests, homosexuality, and same-sex marriage. "We regret," the message says, "the unconditional alignment of our Church with directives issued from Rome." Ah yes, "our Church." There's not much left of it, but it's ours. To be fair, there is a great deal of Catholic vitality in Canada. Despite priests and religious who adopt the posture of prophets in their touching eagerness to imitate their secularized betters who control the commanding heights, so to speak, of Canadian culture.

■ The Rev. Jane Spahr of San Rafael, California, was found not guilty of misconduct by a judicial commission of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Rev. Spahr proudly admitted to performing marriage ceremonies for lesbian couples. The tribunal of the Presbytery of the Redwoods explained that the church's regulations that reserve marriage for a man and woman "is a definition, not a directive." The logic would seem to be that, since definitions have to do only with reality, adhering to them is optional. The tribunal further explained that she was acting "within her right conscience" and according to the "normative standards" of the region. In traditional theological systems, regional standards are a sadly neglected source of religious truth.

■ A few people in an office in Rome have oversight of nearly 3,500 seminaries, 1,500 colleges and universities, and thousands upon thousands of Catholic schools with more than fifty million students around the world. It gives one a certain perspective on the question raised by a parent when something goes wrong at St. Agatha's parish down the street: "Why doesn't Rome do something about this?" Archbishop Michael Miller is secretary of the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education. He is an American and a Basilian, the latter meaning that he is a priest of the Order of St. Basil, which has a special charism for education. Recently he served up some down-home truths about Catholic higher education. There are more than 200 such institutions in the United States, some of which are very dubiously Catholic. Speaking at Notre Dame, Miller said that in the 1960s, many of them joined in a concerted effort "to divorce the university's Catholic identity from any juridical bond with the visible Church." In 1990, Pope John Paul's constitution *Ex corde ecclesiae* (from the heart of the Church) provided that, when institutions are no longer Catholic in any meaningful sense of the word, bishops could officially declare that they are not Catholic institutions. A handful of schools in this country no longer publicly identify themselves as Catholic, and more may follow that course. When he was Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Miller notes, Pope Benedict favored an "evangelical pruning" of institutions that had abandoned their Catholic mission. Will that happen on a broader scale? Miller says, "The coming years will not be lacking in interest in this regard—which is a Vatican circumlocution for saying they will be exciting." Miller strikes another note seldom heard in this country: "How can the Catholic academy in the U.S., and to a lesser extent in Europe, blessed with such enormous wealth, make a significant contribution to institutions of higher learning in the Third World?" This is a question of "international solidarity," which is another way of saying Catholic. Viewed from the perspective of the universal Church, there is a great scandal in the fact that institutions in the United States charge $40,000 for tuition and have hundreds of millions, or more, in endowments while students in a college in Nigeria have no textbooks. As Archbishop Miller says, and as a measure of "evangelical pruning" might underscore, an institution that describes itself as Catholic should not be given a free ride on a brand name.

■ Schools of education, it seems, are increasingly being turned into schools of reeducation. The college of education at the University of Alabama is officially committed "to preparing individuals to promote social justice, to be change agents, and to recognize individuals and institutionalized racism, sexism, homophobia, and classism." Its mission includes training teachers to "develop anti-racist, anti-homophobic, anti-sexist alliances." Alabama is, at last report, a red state, so a lot of reeducation is in order. In the blue world, the school of education at Brooklyn College declares: "We educate teacher candidates and other school personnel about issues of social justice such as institutionalized racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism; and invite them to develop strategies and practices that challenge such biases." The herd of independent minds will not tolerate dissent. Last year Ed Swan flunked an "evaluation of dispositions" at Washington State. He is a conservative Christian and the loving father of four Mexican American children but, said the evaluator, he had "revealed opinions that have caused me great concern in the areas of race, gender, sexual orientation, and privilege." He was directed to attend extended sensitivity training before he would be allowed to continue his program. Schools of education, one notes, are not private entities but have state-granted power to license

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and thus control who gets to teach. As many have had occasion to observe, the one thing not allowed on today's diversity-obsessed campus is diversity on the questions that matter to those in charge.

■ A while back I spoke at a prestigious East Coast college, and things seemed to go rather well. Among matters raised in the question period was the Church's teaching on homosexuality, and I gave what I hope was a straightforward response. At a dinner with faculty members afterward, one professor remarked, "We could never have gotten away with what you said about homosexual acts being morally disordered." As the conversation continued, the opinion was offered and gained general assent that about one third of the young men in the school were experimenting with homogenital sex or publicly identified themselves as gay. The situation, it was said, is not that different with the young women, many of whom describe themselves as LUGs—"lesbians until graduation." All were of the view that their college is, on these scores, not very different from other institutions similarly situated. From the initial orientation sessions through the following four years, students are insistently reminded of the intolerable injustice of homophobia, with it frequently being suggested that a refusal to engage in homogenital acts is a form of homophobia. Some conservative thinkers confidently assert that the unnaturalness of homosexuality places severe limits on its general acceptance, and I expect there is a great deal to that. At the same time, one cannot help but be impressed by the effectiveness of the continuing "march through the institutions."

■ The maxim that he who marries the spirit of the age will soon be a widower comes to mind upon reading the report of the Episcopal Church's Standing Committee on Domestic Mission and Evangelism. The General Convention of the church adopted a "20/20" movement that aimed at doubling average Sunday attendance (ASA) by 2020. "Current data," the report says, "indicate that we are going in the wrong direction. So far, what has doubled is the rate of decline in attendance." Between 2002 and 2003, ASA declined by 23,000 nationwide. Between 2003 and 2004, it declined by 27,000. The commission report does not mince words: "At which General Convention will we debate a resolution to dissolve the Episcopal Church? . . . Let us be clear: We are talking about the decline of the Episcopal Church, not of God's mission. God works in mysterious ways, and the Holy Spirit will find a way to reach the people of the 21st century. The question is whether our historic tradition and church will be connected to that work." Please, hold those messages complaining about my being excessively critical of the Episcopal Church. This is an official report from that venerable communion.

■ "We'd all be better off if we just got out and forgot about it," opined the fellow on a talk show the other day. The topic was Iraq and, more generally, the United States and world affairs. For some reason, that brought to mind Philip Larkin's poem "Homage To A Government":

Next year we are to bring all the soldiers home
For lack of money, and it is all right.
Places they guarded, or kept orderly,
We want the money for ourselves at home
Instead of working. And this is all right.
It's hard to say who wanted it to happen,
But now it's been decided nobody minds.
The places are a long way off, not here,
Which is all right, and from what we hear
The soldiers there only made trouble happen.
Next year we shall be easier in our minds.
Next year we shall be living in a country
That brought its soldiers home for lack of money.
The statues will be standing in the same
Tree-muffled squares, and look nearly the same.
Our children will not know it's a different country.
All we can hope to leave them now is money.

■ Hadley Arkes of Amherst bears the impressive title of William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Science. He alone routinely refers to "First Things, the magazine." That is because, twenty years ago this year, he published an important book titled *First Things: An Inquiry into the First Principles of Morals and Justice*. When in 1989 we were trying to come up with a title for this journal, I was not aware of having Hadley's book in mind. I was thinking of a work by Origen, the third-century Church father: *Peri Arkon*, rendered in Latin as *De Principiis*. But I had read Hadley's book and it is quite possible that it influenced my decision more than I thought. In any event, *First Things*, the book, is very much worth reading twenty years later. Arkes' argument, advanced with unrelenting reason and engaging historical illustrations, is that, just as there are necessary truths in mathematics and physics, so there are necessary moral truths. He demonstrates how many contemporary ethicists and moral philosophers have bought into a relativism that results in their abandoning their subject matter in favor of survey research on moral opinions and feelings. All who know Hadley Arkes are impressed by his indefatigable energy in making moral arguments in support of the protection of the unborn and other matters of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elementary justice. What on earth keeps him going? Quite simply and invigoratingly, he is confident that he is bearing witness to necessary moral truths.

■ I will not resist the temptation to quote from the last page of *First Things*, the book: "I think I can offer, then, some final words of assurance to the readers who have followed me through these chapters. Generations from now, the person who insists that there is no truth—or who claims that he does not recognize the existence of space and time—will still suffer the embarrassment of self-contradiction. That luckless fellow who is thrown out the window of a tall building, and breaks an awning on his way down to earth, will still not be responsible for the damage which he did not intend and which he was powerless to avoid. Even if the cause of 'animal liberation' should become more advanced than it has in our own day, people will still not be signing labor contracts with their cows or horses, and they will still not think it particularly informative or necessary to seek the consent of their resident dogs before they would presume to govern them. But those who continue to be aware of the differences in nature which separate human beings from animals will continue to understand that creatures who are capable of giving and understanding reasons deserve to be ruled only with their consent. At the same time, regimes which visit destruction on people because of their race or ethnicity, without making discriminations of innocence and guilt, will continue to mark themselves as despicable. The wrongness of their acts will be regarded, by men and women of understanding, as categorically, unconditionally wrong. That wrongness will not be lessened by the attenuations of circumstance; it will not be mitigated by matters of degree; and it will not be effaced by any claim to serve a larger 'good.' The willingness to inflict punishment without respecting the difference between innocence and guilt will be taken as the definitive and lasting mark of the corrupt, because its wrongness will continue to arise from the logic of morals itself, and it will continue to be wrong so long as the logic of morals itself endures. Thus it is, and thus it shall ever be, for in the nature of things it cannot be otherwise." Those who do not find that convincing, as in self-evident, are referred to the preceding 425 pages of *First Things*, the book.

■ This is vile. The *New Yorker* has this full-page picture of the boy Joseph Ratzinger in the uniform of a Hitler Youth. The long article by Timothy W. Ryback tries every angle to indict Pope Benedict as being less than sufficiently unsympathetic to the Nazis. In 2004, Ratzinger visited a cemetery for German soldiers and said, "As Germans, we cannot help but be painfully moved to realize that their idealism and their obedience to the state were misused by an unjust government." He honored their idealism and obedience! On another occasion, Ratzinger said the rise of Hitler was aided by the imposition, mainly at the insistence of the French, of an unjust Versailles treaty. Every scholar of the period agrees, but for Ryback this means that "a prominent and respected public figure [is] blaming other Europeans, particularly the French, for Germany's headlong plunge into National Socialism." Again, Ratzinger said we should remember that not only Jews died in the death camps, and that Hitler intended to destroy also the Church. How dare he say that! For Ryback, it seems, this makes Benedict tantamount to a Holocaust denier. We are told that "his pronouncements on collective German responsibility have raised questions of theology." Which, of course, is nonsense. Avery Cardinal Dulles is quoted in the article and makes clear there is no theological question at all. "The gospel says you love everybody and hate nobody. You pray for your enemies and those who persecute you." Ryback is unimpressed. Pope Benedict—and perhaps he would include Cardinal Dulles as well—is soft on Nazism. This is vile. As in vilification.

■ It would be too much to say that the Church of England has declared the State of Israel to be on a moral par with South Africa during the apartheid era. But the rhetoric and the strategy is disturbingly similar. In February, the General Synod of the Church of England voted to sell its stock in companies that supply equipment to the Israel Defense Force. The disinvestment strategy provoked an uncharacteristically sharp response from Britain's chief rabbi, Sir Jonathan Sacks. He pointed out to Archbishop Rowan Williams that "Israel faces two enemies, Iran and Hamas, that are open in their threat to eliminate it." And there are domestic consequences, he notes. "The church has chosen to take a stand on the politics of the Middle East over which it has no influence, knowing that it will have the most adverse repercussions on a situation over which it has enormous influence, namely Jewish-Christian relations in Britain." Rowan's "Dear Jonathan" letter in response to Rabbi Sacks was, writes British commentator Daniel Johnson, "as unctuous as it was disingenuous." That is harsh, but it is true that Rowan says he "had been present" at the synod meeting, when in fact he had voted with the majority. And he declares that he finds the thought abhorrent that any member of the synod "would have an instant's sympathy with any such hostility to the Jewish people or the State of Israel as such." Maybe disingenuous is the necessary word. Dr. Williams is not blind and deaf. Those in the Church of England who are agitating for disin-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vestment and other anti-Israel measures, and who got part of what they wanted at the February meeting, make no secret of their sympathy for a Palestinian cause that includes among its stated purposes the destruction of the State of Israel. Let me say it once again: There can be legitimate criticism of the policies of Israel, and Jewish-Christian relations must not be held hostage to uncritical support for Israel. But neither should anyone pretend that the disinvestment strategy is not aimed at turning Israel into a pariah nation along the lines of apartheid South Africa. The action of the General Synod and Dr. Williams' construal of that action are deeply disappointing.

■ It is not surprising that Christine Rosen bridles at the subtitle of a new book by Harry Bruinius, *Better for All the World: The Secret History of Forced Sterilization and America's Quest for Racial Purity.* She points out that the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century is hardly a secret, and she mentions several influential studies and books. Ms. Rosen is self-effacing enough not to mention her own important book of 2004, *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement.* In the infamous 1927 *Buck v. Bell* decision, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. wrote for the Supreme Court majority, "It is better for all the world, if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit for continuing their kind. Three generations of imbeciles are enough." After the horrors of Nazism were defeated and exposed, eugenics became a dirty word, but it is important to remember that for a long time it was a favored "progressive" cause of those enlightened by the best science of the time. Rosen writes: "The 'age-old passions and human desires' for improvement that Mr. Bruinius describes exist in all of us. In a world where new genetic technologies offer even greater opportunities for shaping human life, it is worth remembering that moral scruples and a respect for human dignity are not as widely shared." She is almost certainly right about that, which means that attentiveness to the unscrupulous must be relentless.

■ After eighty-two years of publishing, the *New Leader* has folded. There is always a sadness, and not only for those of us in the business, when a magazine dies. I confess that I have only infrequently had occasion to look at the *New Leader* for many years. It was once an important voice, distinguished on the left for having no illusions about the evil of Communism. It helped introduce readers to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and counted among its contributors such luminaries as George Orwell, Reinhold Niebuhr, Murray Kempton, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and it was where Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail" was first published. With the end of the Cold War, it was often said in the early 1990s, conservatism had lost its reason for being. Conservatism has since invented abundant reasons for being. It is the more centrist liberalism, represented by, for instance, the *New Leader*, that was set adrift. Myron Kolatch, who spent his entire adult life editing the magazine, says, "I think it's sad that there isn't support for our kind of magazine, especially in this age of polarization, where you have people screeching from the right and screeching from the left and the *New Republic* just seems confused." It is a telling statement. The *New Leader* is to be commended for seldom screeching, unlike the *Nation*, the scowship of the left that has done very handsomely by the conservative intellectual and political ascendancy. I agree with Mr. Kolatch that the *New Republic* frequently seems confused, but that is in part because it is trying, however awkwardly, to come to terms with a new time in which the intellectual default position is not liberalism. The *New Leader* lived and died by the assumption that serious discourse was about gradations of a liberalism that has largely disappeared.

■ The Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches met in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and the leaders of American oldline denominations distinguished themselves by confessing our sins. They asked God's forgiveness for America's sins of warmongering, environmental endangerment, and indifference to the poor. "From a place seduced by the lure of empire we come to you in penitence, eager for grace, grace sufficient to transform spirits grown weary from the violence, degradation, and poverty our nation has sown." Since September 11, they confessed, the United States has been "entering into imperial projects that seek to dominate and control" and "raining down terror on the truly vulnerable among our global neighbors." The government, they lament, is "idolatrous" and guilty of "deception," while "racism infects our policies around the world." Upon the completion of the rite of self-degradation—or, more precisely, vicarious degradation on our behalf—the Americans were allowed to take their seats in the council of the internationally righteous.

■ The Court of Appeals in Gota, Sweden, has reversed the conviction of Pastor Ake Green who had been sentenced to a month in jail for preaching a sermon in which he quoted Bible passages highly critical of homogenital sex. In its majority opinion the court noted that Pastor Green's words were "no worse than the Bible texts themselves." Defenders of religious

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

freedom were encouraged that Sweden is not yet prepared to ban the Bible.

■ Seneca wrote, "Anyone can stop a man's life, but no one his death; a thousand doors open on to it." From that Sandra M. Gilbert takes her title, *Death's Door: Modern Dying and the Ways We Grieve* (Norton). It is a big book, handsomely bound and illustrated, and is nearly a thesaurus of what modern writers and poets have said about death and thinking about death. Gilbert is a noted literary critic and she obviously knows her stuff. She ends up, however, on the limp note that Magritte's painting of an open door, titled *La Victoire*, is the final wisdom about death. "So perhaps Magritte meant to tell us that looking, just *looking*, at this perpetually open door is in itself a victory." Presumably that is all that Sandra Gilbert means to tell us as well. She refers to her unseriously Catholic childhood, but throughout the stated assumption is that she and her readers no longer find Christian responses to death plausible, if they ever did. The consolation of religion refused, one is left with the consolation of having—bravely, it is thought—refused consolation. Rejecting religious authority, she embraces literary authorities who assure her that she is right to reject authority. When I wrote the little book *As I Lay Dying*, reflecting on my bout with cancer some years ago, I was struck by the prevalence of despair treated as a virtue in so much writing about death and dying. It is thought to be a mark of intellectual sophistication to dismiss desire and hope as possible guides to truth. What we desire and hope for can, of course, turn out to be in error, but despair is always without reward. Except for the dubious satisfaction of being deemed a modern sophisticate. In that case, looking at this perpetually open door to nowhere, and *to be seen* looking at this door, is a kind of victory.

■ It's been a year now, and I expect it's one story that, after hundreds of news cycles, has not disappeared down the memory hole. Say "Terri Schiavo" and everybody knows what you're talking about. At least everybody on the pro-life side of our cultural divide. But not only there. I noticed the other day a leftist columnist ranting on about "the right-wing hysteria to make us believe that a dead woman wanted to live." A section of *Catholic Matters* is the "Rome Diary" I kept during the not-to-be-forgotten days of John Paul's dying and the election of Pope Benedict. That's also when Terri Schiavo was killed, and the *New York Times* editorialized against those fanatical right-to-lifers who denied Schiavo the death with dignity enjoyed by John Paul. Weird. I wrote there that the left, backed by the court system, was determined to "make her dead." Some object to that, of course, claiming that she had been dead for a long time. But, if she was dead, the next thing to do would be to bury her. They were not prepared to do that, however. Something else had to be done first, and the only way to describe that something else is to make her dead.

■ We must not forget what happened then. Paul Greenberg, one of the most thoughtful of public voices, has not forgotten. He writes about the dehumanizing term "Persistent Vegetative State" (PVS), which implicitly denies even animal status to the stricken. Remember the firefighter in Buffalo, New York, who suddenly awoke and for months conversed with family and friends after ten years in PVS. And the medical researcher who, after years in PVS, suddenly responded to a highly technical question put to him. Dr. Paul McHugh relates that story. "Subsequently," he wrote in *Commentary*, "in all the months we cared for him, he would never utter another word. But what a difference that moment had made to all of us. We matured that day not only in matters of the mind but in matters of the heart. If we had ever had misgivings before, we would never again doubt the value of caring for people like him." Greenberg asks the necessary questions: "But what if that distinguished doctor and scientist had never responded? What if the heroic firefighter had never awakened from his coma? Would that have made either of them less worthy of care? . . . Would any of us know what dreams were being dreamed, what memories relived, what delights rehearsed, what nightmares endured, within such a mind—a mind we do not know quite as much about as we may pretend?"

■ Then he returns to Terri Schiavo. "When Terri Schiavo was denied food and water by order of the court, it took her thirteen long, slow, agonizing days to die of dehydration. Thirteen days. It would have been kinder to shoot her. But that would have been against the law, and we know the law is just." There was a seemingly little thing that Paul Greenberg says keeps coming back. "Funny how, long after you've forgotten everything else about some big story, one detail will stick in your mind. Have you ever sat by the bedside of a dying patient—a father or mother, perhaps, or someone else you loved—and given the patient a little chipped ice? And seen the relief and inaudible *thank you* in the drug-dimmed eyes? After all the futile treatments and the succession of helpless doctors, when grief has come even before the death, you sit there with a little cracked ice for the patient's parched mouth and throat, and think. . . . *At last I can do this one little thing right. I'm not totally useless.* However much a little ice might help your patient, it does wonders for the caregiver. You

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suddenly realize why people go into nursing. Can there be any greater satisfaction than this? But when the law decreed that Terri Schiavo was to be given no food or water, it *meant* no food or water. That's what the court, the sheriff's deputies, the whole clanking machinery of the law was there for—to see that the severe decree was carried out. That's what the new art and science of bioethics at the drawn of the 21st century had come down to in the end: *No cracked ice for Terri Schiavo.*" We must never let Terri Schiavo, and all the other Terri Schiavos, be forgotten. The truth that is written on our hearts—the truth that the culture of death is determined to erase—is really quite simple: Always to care, never to kill.

Sources: Patty Crowley, *New York Times*, December 31, 2005. Ubersexuals, *Brandweek*, October 24, 2005. Fessio on Pope and Islam, letter to *Washington Times*, January 20. *Book of Daniel*, Institute on Religion and Democracy press release, January 12. Reese resignation, *National Catholic Reporter*, March 17. Byassee on trust in princes, *Christianity Today*, March 16. Consecrating a blueberry muffin, *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 11. Erlandson, *Our Sunday Visitor*, February 26. Unborn child, *New York Times*, March 14. Steinfels on Carter, *Commonweal*, March 10. Canadian prophets, LifeSite-News, March 8. Reverend Jane Spahr, *San Francisco Examiner*, March 3. Pruning the Church, *origins*, December 15, 2005. Schools of education, *Washington Post*, February 5. Vilifying Ratzinger, *New Yorker*, February 6. Anti-Israel Anglicans, *New York Sun*, February 23. Rosen on eugenics, *Wall Street Journal*, February 28. End of the road, *New Leader*, January 23. World Council of Churches, Institute for Religion and Democracy press release, February 21. Swedes and the Bible, *Forum Letter*, March. Greenberg on Schiavo, *New York Sun*, March 6.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*The Alberta Safeguards Foundation and the Syracuse University Training Institute for Human Service Planning are pleased to announce the presentation of the **seven day** workshop*

How to Function Morally, Coherently & Adaptively in a Dysfunctional (Human Service) World

Saturday, June 10 — Friday, June 16, 2006
University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA

Workshop teachers

This workshop is authored by Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger of the Syracuse University Training Institute for Human Service Planning, New York, USA. Dr. Wolfensberger has trained and continues to mentor each of the teachers of this workshop, although he will not personally be present at this event.

Workshop format

Each day begins promptly at 8 am, and there will be evening sessions. This workshop is taught lecture style, with a series of presentations given in a logical sequence of topics, some of which are quite lengthy. Each presentation is followed by opportunity for comment and discussion. During the event, there will be several opportunities for breakout group discussions under experienced group leaders.

Tuition and meals

Tuition is $475 Canadian. Fee reductions are available; please contact the registrar for more information. Meals are available at an additional (tentative) cost of $120 Canadian.

Housing accommodations

Housing accommodations are available directly from the University of Calgary. Please contact Carla Hamarsnes (see details below) for further information.

Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger developed this workshop to equip people with the combination of worldview, preparation, and support that they will need in order to survive with their moral ideals, with their integrity intact, and hopefully also with some effectiveness, in human services today. Anyone involved in the field of human services (whether through work, volunteer or family connections) has seen firsthand many of the problems of services in today's world. Our world contains powerful dynamics of dysfunctionality, which manifest themselves in pervasive tendencies of service efforts to disorder and even violence. Organized agency services especially do not work well over the long run, and often end up doing the opposite of the noble purposes they started with or still claim. This bodes ill for people dependent on such services.

Although most people are not, or do not want to be, aware of these dynamics, it is imperative that those who do want to function with greater personal moral coherency be aware of them. Once one is aware of these dynamics, one is in a position to respond to them much more adaptively. There is an array of adaptive strategies for living with these realities, many of which can be taught and learned. This workshop will attempt to orient participants to decisions they need to make, offer strategies to assist them in such decision-making, and clarify the likely consequences of their decisions.

To register or for more information

Please contact the workshop registrar Carla Hamarsnes 403 249 1554 or chamarsn@ucalgary.ca.

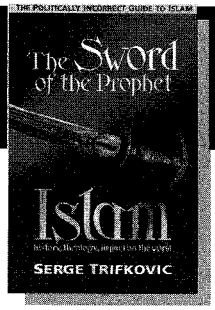
When registering, please send your name, address, phone number and email address with payment to:

Carla Hamarsnes
2723 - 16 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, AB T3C 1A3
CANADA

Make checks for tuition and/or meals payable to Alberta Safeguards Foundation.
All registrations received in time will be confirmed in writing.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's beginning to dawn on Americans of all persuasions that Islam is no friend



And none too soon, says journalist-scholar Serge Trifkovic, whose alarming new book documents present-day Moslem atrocities on several continents. He also examines:

- ▼ The anti-Christian bias of most major media coverage which, oddly enough, leads to whitewashing of the Islamic faith
- ▼ Actual teachings of both "militant Islam" and allegedly "moderate Islam"
- ▼ Hair-raising elements in the Koran
- ▼ The prophet Mohammed's life and works, in disturbing detail
- ▼ Treatment of females, easy divorce, temporary marriage, quantity of wives: but you've probably heard only a fraction of the horrors Moslem women face
- ▼ Why "right" and "just" in Islam have shifting meanings and are not anchored in God's decrees
- ▼ Moslem massacres in the past few years
- ▼ The golden age of Islam—a sobering overview, and one that belies the notion that Moslems are inept
- ▼ Our ally, Saudi Arabia. A true portrait of the regime
- ▼ Homosexuality, in the twisted Islamic purview
- ▼ Moslem minorities in Christian countries: The Koran permits them to adopt a peaceful approach—but only to deceive
- ▼ Chapter: "Western Appeasement." Why we're afraid, how liberals undermine resolve, what lessons we should take from Europe's recent experience with Moslems
- ▼ Chapter: "Jihad's Fifth Column." Their operations and scope of activity in our own country

Save 66%

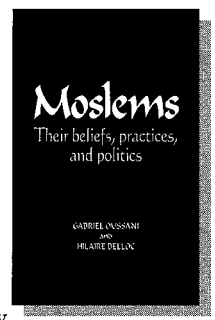
Publisher's price of *Sword of the Prophet*	$19.95
Publisher's price of *Moslems*	$18.80
Both	$38.75

Your price for BOTH books in this Special Offer ONLY...

$13.17!

Available Separately
If you don't want to take advantage of this Special Offer, each book is available separately at the publisher's suggested retail price: $19.95 for *Sword of the Prophet* and $18.80 for *Moslems*.

Over 50 years before Serge Trifkovic's exposé on Islam the great writer Hilaire Belloc warned:



"I cannot but believe that a main unexpected thing of the future is the return of Islam."

Belloc's words were written in 1936—long before the Christian West permitted millions of Moslems to immigrate and proliferate, building thousands of new mosques in the United States and Europe, including a huge one in Rome itself a few years ago. Belloc's essay on Moslems, together with five important and meaty Catholic Encyclopedia articles by scholar Gabriel Oussani from 1908, comprise this valuable book. Major themes:

- ▼ What Mohammed actually taught.
- ▼ How close the Moslems came—as recently as three centuries ago—to dominating Europe by force
- ▼ Why the Moslem military threat was so real...and then collapsed
- ▼ The real origins and astonishingly rapid development of Islam
- ▼ All about the Crusades (and why *do* Church leaders apologize for them?)

Belloc and Oussani's writings make clear that Moslems and Christians don't mix very well. The lesson: Christians need to reproduce to survive. Just as important: Christians cannot share political power with sworn enemies without dire consequences for their children and grandchildren.

Roman Catholic Books • P.O. Box 2286 • Fort Collins, CO 80522-2286 • Fax: 253-323-7204 • BooksforCatholics.com

TITLE	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
❑ Yes, I'd like to Save 66% and buy both			
Sword of the Prophet/Moslems		$13.17	
I'd rather take only the book indicated below at the suggested retail price			
❑ *Sword of the Prophet*		$19.95	
❑ *Moslems*		$18.80	
		Subtotal	$
		Please add $4 postage & handling for each order	$
		TOTAL	$

Please use campaign code FT506 when you order both books on our website www.BooksforCatholics.com. This will ensure you get your discount.

PLEASE PRINT

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State____ Zip_____

Telephone _____

Charge my ❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard

#_____ Exp.____

Signature_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED